

# The Irish Chess Journal

September 2007



## Irish Champions 2007



### Inside:

Irish Championships  
Cork, Bunratty, Ennis

- all the tournaments

Leagues

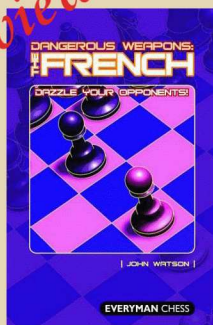
Leinster League Strength

FIDE Ratings List

Upcoming Events

and more...

*Reviewed*





## Irish Chess Journal

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Additional thanks to Ciaran Ruane for his help proof reading this issue. We might even have gotten the right month on the cover this time.

The editors would like express our gratitude to everyone who contributed to this issue, and apologise if we've forgotten anyone!

### Disclaimer

The opinions expressed herein are strictly those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Irish Chess Union, its officers or members.

### Symbols used in this magazine

+ Check  
# Checkmate  
!! Excellent Move  
! Good move  
! ? Interesting move  
? ! Dubious move  
? Bad move  
?? Blunder  
⊖ Better is  
= Equal position  
∞ Unclear position  
± White is slightly better  
∓ Black is slightly better  
± White is better  
∓ Black is better  
+- White is winning  
-+ Black is winning  
(N) Novelty  
(D) Diagram

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*All the upcoming events. Well, all the ones we're aware of anyway. If we forgot yours, it's your fault. Our email address is on this page. Make sure it doesn't happen again!*

## Editorial

Hello everyone. We haven't indulged ourselves with an editorial before now, preferring to focus on chess news rather than the blather you usually get in these things. However, after three years of producing the ICJ, the time has come for us to step down because of time constraints.

Relaunching the then defunct Irish Chess Journal was a project we felt well worth doing. At the time, it was becoming intolerably difficult to find out information about the Irish chess scene, with the demise of the old journal and John Hurley's Chess Ireland website. Since that time, matters have improved immensely. Mark Orr undertook the total redesign of the website, and has produced an elegant and immensely useful site, with tournament reports, news, ratings, an events calander, club information, online membership payment, games and image databases and even daily reports from a couple of major events instantly available to ICU members. Coupled with the journal, there is now no shortage of information on events.

As such, we are eager to see the journal carried on, even to contribute to future issues, but someone else needs to step forward to take over the editing. We also note that the ICU hasn't filled the role of development officer, so if anyone's interested, please step forward.

We hope you enjoy this issue.

*John Healy & Kevin Burke*

### Ireland's Biggest Chess Store is only one e-mail or phone call away!

Grandmaster Alexander Baburin has a wide selection of chess books, software and clocks for sale. We have latest chess books from all major UK chess publishers (Gambit, Everyman and Batsford), as well as from 'New in Chess' (Netherlands), 'Edition Olms' (Germany) and 'Siles Press' (USA). We stock clocks from DGT and Garde and software from ChessBase and Chess Academy. You can order ChessBase 9, Fritz 10, as well as other engines (Junior 10, HiarcS 10, etc) and instructional DVDs. Also available are score-books and chess sets (plastic, wooden and magnetic).

E-mail us at [ababurin@iol.ie](mailto:ababurin@iol.ie) to request a free catalogue e-mailed to you in PDF format. You can also order over the phone: (01) 278-2276 or 087-968-2378. If you need help with choosing appropriate books, clocks or software, we'll be happy to assist!

## News

### New ICU Free Online Magazine for Juniors

The Irish Chess Union is delighted to announce the publication of the first issue of its new online Chess Magazine for our rising stars, *Junior Chess Corner* [pdf, 4.5MB].

A free and informative guide to Junior chess in Ireland today, *Junior Chess Corner* profiles some of Ireland's leading juniors ahead of Ireland's hosting of the Glorney and Faber this July in DCU. The magazine is also designed to help chess players of all ages starting out, who would like to improve their own game, through game commentaries and articles which are accessible to chess players of all ages and strengths. Recognising the vital role that parents play in encouraging and facilitating their children to play chess, *Junior Chess Corner* contains a special section in which parents discuss their own experiences of Irish and International chess, and provide advice for parents whose children are starting out in chess.

In Ireland today, there are circa 10,000 children playing chess on a regular basis in primary and secondary schools and it is hoped that *Junior Chess Corner* will provide an outlet for kids to learn more about the sport of chess and improve their game.

### Tom Clarke 1959-2007

Tom Clarke passed away in the early hours of Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> April after a long illness. Tom won numerous tournaments the length and breadth of Ireland over a period of over thirty years. He represented Ireland in the 1988 and 1992 Olympiads and the 1989 European Team Championship. A memorial service was held at St. Patrick's Parish Church, Drumbeg, Belfast on 19<sup>th</sup> May. An appreciation (<http://www.ulsterchess.org/Archives/playerbio/tom-clarke/tom-clarke-1959-2007/view>) by David Houston is available on the UCU website and a number of Tom's best games have been put up on the ICU site, including this one.

**O'Kinneide, M - Clarke, T [A89]  
IRL-ch, Drogheda (2), 04.04.1999**

*Notes by Mel O'Kinneide*

**1.d4 f5 2.g3 Nf6 3.Bg2 g6 4.Nf3 Bg7 5.0-0 0-0 6.c4 d6  
7.Nc3 Nc6 8.d5 Ne5 9.Nxe5 dxe5 10.Qb3 h6 11.c5 Kh8  
12.Rd1 g5 13.Bd2 f4 14.Be1 Bg4 15.Qc4 Qc8**

Tom builds up an attacking position here, but White's position is perfectly solid.

**16.Ne4 Bh3 17.Bh1 Ng4 18.Rac1 Qe8 19.Nd2 Qh5  
20.Nf3 fxg3 21.hxg3 Bf1 !!?**

This move, and the subsequent play, are in some way very typical of Tom's style. Nothing is threatened, and indeed the move may not be objectively good, but it ratchets up the tension in the position considerably. I spent my next 14 moves wondering how to exploit this cheeky bishop, before finally imploding:

**22.Qe4 Rf7 23.Rc4 Raf8 24.d6 exd6 25.cxd6 cxd6**

**26.Rxd6 Nf6 27.Qc2 e4 28.Ne5 Re7 29.g4?!**

About here the pressure got to me...

29...Qe8 30.Bc3 Rxe5 31.Bxe5 Qxe5 32.Rxf6 Qxf6 33.f3  
exf3 34.Bxf3

And here I dreamed briefly that Tom's bishop was trapped on f1. However

**34...Bxe2**

and it's all over

**35.Bxe2 Qf2+ 36.Kh1 Qe1+ 37.Kh2 Rf2+**

Thanks for the many fascinating battles, Tom. Rest in Peace. **0-1**

**ICU Website Opens Up**

Apart from a few exceptions, all parts of the website are publically accessible from March 2007 until further notice. For ordinary ICU members, this means that logins will no longer be required to view ratings, articles and most other content. However, website editors and committee members with access to private data will continue to require logins (and PINs).

Current ICU members who have website accounts may, if they wish, continue to login to access the site. Apart from the display of the member's name in the top right corner, the extra features that logging-in makes available are:

When a member logs-in the site is aware of their identity and so can provide a link (under the Ratings category on the left) straight to the member's rating data. Without a login, this link will not appear, but members can still view their rating history (see below).

Edit Preferences is a link that appears under Members after logging-in and allows members to choose between the default dark style of the site or the alternative light style. The chosen preference is currently stored with login account details and in the absence of a login the site uses the default style.

Voting is only available to logged-in members.

The My Rating link is convenient but won't appear without a login. So how can a member still view their rating history without logging in? There are two ways to do this, both are links under the heading Ratings on the left.

1. Click List Ratings, which lists all the ratings in a given list (by default, the latest list). Scroll down the list for your name or search using the form provided at the top. When you find your name, click your rating and your whole rating history will be displayed.
2. Click List Members, which lists all players who have been an ICU member at some time since the website began operation (late 2004). Scroll down the list for your name or search using the form provided at the top. When you find it, click your name and your rating history will be displayed.

PINs, which are issued to members when they join each season, are still required for keeping a website login active

or registering a new one. However, if a member doesn't care about the small number of extra features logging in now provides, they don't need to login and therefore don't need a PIN.

If a member does want to login they will need a PIN number, so they must be subscribed to the ICU. In future seasons, members are recommended to subscribe online to avoid any hassle. In practice it has proved a challenge for the membership officer to consistently acknowledge postal subscriptions with the correct ICU and PIN numbers. In contrast, online subscriptions mean less work for all concerned and are much more reliable and efficient.

You can express your opinion on website access policy in this poll. You'll have to login though, as voting is one of the few remaining features still requiring ICU membership.

**Marcel Castricum Memorial Tournament**

Three Irish players were among the 28 competitors at the Marcel Castricum memorial tournament held in the Netherlands recently. John Cassidy and Rory Quinn of Ennis chess club and Kieran O'Driscoll made the journey to Marcel's home town of Cuijk in Southern Holland. During his time in Ireland Marcel played for both Ennis and Cork chess clubs, as well as winning the North Munster and Connaught championships.

The tournament was held at Vianen chess club just a short distance from Marcel's final resting place in Cuijk. The pace of play was fast with just 20 minutes per player for all moves. Best of the Irish was Rory Quinn who finished in 6th place on 4½ points. Kieran and John both scored 2½ points and finished in 20th and 22nd place respectively.

All in all, the tournament was a very enjoyable one and a nice tribute to Marcel. It even garnered some press coverage in the local media. It is to be hoped that it will run again next year and that some more Irish players will travel to play in it. Special thanks must go to Marcel's parents Henk and Elly Castricum for the welcome afforded to all the Irish players.

Ennis chess club paid its own small tribute to Marcel by presenting the winner of the U1400 section in the Ennis tournament with a perpetual trophy, the Marcel Castricum Cup.

**Gary Kasparov Interview**

Former World Champion Gary Kasparov gave an interview to Ryan Tubridy last April in which he talks mainly about Russian politics and his book *How Life Imitates Chess*. To listen to the interview, click on the following link and scroll down to the show from the 4<sup>th</sup> of April.

[http://www.rte.ie/radio1/podcast/podcast\\_tubridy.xml](http://www.rte.ie/radio1/podcast/podcast_tubridy.xml)

**British Women's Chess Association**

Irish players are eligible to play in events run by the British Women's Chess Association (BWCA). See <http://www.bwchess.org.uk/BWCA/index.php> for events.

# Gonzaga Chess Classic

## 1st - 3rd February 2008

Official ICU 6 round Swiss Tournament.  
Gonzaga College Sandford Road, Dublin 6.

Sections	Entrance Fee
Challengers (U.G. -1200)	€30
Major (1200-1600)	€35
Championship (1600-Upwards)	€40
Late Entrance charge + €5. (After 15th January)	

Master (1900-upwards) section may be added  
(entry fee €40)

Entry Forms at  
[www.gonzagaclassic.tk](http://www.gonzagaclassic.tk)

**€2000 Prize Fund**  
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E-mail: [otoole.timmy@gmail.com](mailto:otoole.timmy@gmail.com)  
Phone: 0830077317

\*subject to entry

# The Irish Championships

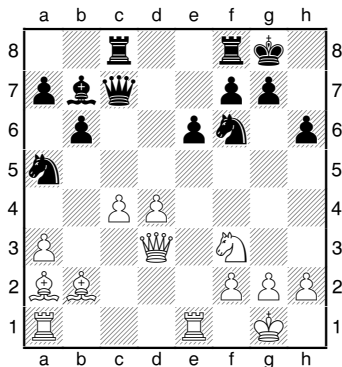
*Text: John Healy and Mark Orr*

*Photos: Mark Orr*

For a number of years, the Irish was in need of a good shakeup. A nine round closed Swiss, it required too much of a commitment from many top players to participate, leading to poorly attended tournaments. Generous sponsorship from Island Oil & Gas along with the vision of the organizers brought a dramatic change this year. The tournament was an open, and was also open to non-Irish players. Along with increased prize-money, this afforded the top players a chance at a title norm\*. Last year's top seeds, FMs Daly, Short and Brady, were joined by foreign grandmasters Mark Hebden, Stewart Conquest, Nick Pert and Eduardas Rozentalis, as well as strong domestic players such as Brian Kelly, Gavin Wall and Mark Orr in a field of around 50 (compared with last year's dozen or so). The Royal Dublin Hotel on O'Connell Street in Dublin was the venue, as it will be again next year, I believe.

IM Brian Kelly and defending champion FM Stephen Brady would emerge joint Irish champions, while GM Mark Hebden won the tournament overall, but now we turn to a blow-by-blow account of the tournament (with thanks to Mark Orr, from whose online daily report some material has been shamelessly reproduced).

As with any large open, round 1 saw some mismatches.



**O'Connell,G - McCabe,D**  
**IRL-ch Dublin (1), 30.06.2007**

**17.d5! exd5 18.Bxf6 dxc4 19.Qf5 gxf6 20.Bb1 1-0**

Gerry McCarthy and I both hung pieces very early on, and most games went with seeding. The only dramatic reversal was Gearóidín Ui Laighléis beating former Irish Champion Eamon Keogh.

\* A norm is one of the requirements for the title of International Master (IM) or International Grandmaster (GM). It is essentially a certain level of performance in a strong enough tournament. Normally, you need three of these plus a high enough rating to earn a title, though one norm earned in an Olympiad is enough on its own.

**Ui Laighleis,G - Keogh,E**  
**IRL-ch Dublin (1), 30.06.2007**

1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 c6 3.e3 g6 4.Bd3 d5 5.Nbd2 Bg7 6.0-0 0-0 7.Re1 b5 8.c3 Nbd7 9.e4 dxe4 10.Nxe4 Nxe4 11.Bxe4 Qc7 12.Bg5 e6 13.Bh4 f5 14.Bc2 Re8 15.Bg3 f4 16.Bh4 Nf8 17.g3 Bh6 18.Bg5 Bxg5 19.Nxg5 fxg3 20.fxg3 c5 21.Ne4 Nd7 22.dxc5 Nxc5 23.Nf6+ Kf7 24.Nxe8 Kxe8 25.Qd4 Qe7 26.Qh8+ Kd7 27.Rad1+ Kc6 28.Qd8 Qc7 29.Qxc7+ Kxc7 30.Rf1 a5 31.Rf7+ Nd7 32.Rxh7 Ra6 33.Bxg6 1-0



Round 2 was far more sensational. A trio of strong Irish players earned results against the grandmasters! John Redmond beat top seed Eduardas Rozentalis, Gerry O'Connell beat Mark Hebden and Simon Jeffares held Stuart Conquest.

**Redmond,J - Rozentalis,E**  
**IRL-ch Dublin (2), 01.07.2007**

*Notes by John Healy*



**1.f4!?**  
Bird's Opening isn't seen much at the top level since Bent Larsson stopped playing, but it's still perfectly servicable, with a few strong players like IM Timothy Taylor and GM Henrik Danielsen still using it regularly.

**1...d5 2.e3 g6 3.Nf3 Bg7 4.Be2 Nd7**  
This move, intending a quick e5, is one of the more topical defences against the Bird's.

**5.Nc3 c6 6.d3 e5 7.e4 Ne7 8.fxe5 Nxe5 9.0-0 d4 10.Nb1 Nxf3+ 11.Bxf3 0-0 12.Bf4 c5 13.a4 Nc6 14.Na3 Be6 15.Bg4 a6 16.Bxe6 fxe6 17.Qg4 Qd7 18.Nc4 Rae8 19.a5 Nb4 20.Rf2 Re7 21.Raf1 Ref7 22.b3 Rf6 23.Qe2 Na2 24.Bd2 Nc3 25.Qe1 Nb5 26.Bf4 Qd8 27.Qe2 Nc3 28.Qe1 R6f7 29.Bd2 Rxf2 30.Rxf2 Nb5 31.Rxf8+ Qxf8 32.Qf2 Qxf2+ 33.Kxf2 Kf7**

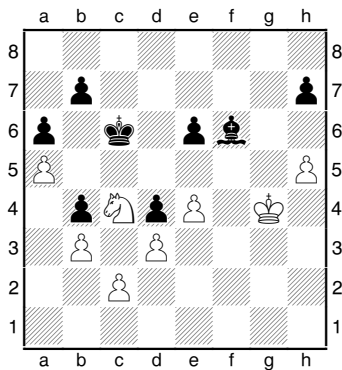
After all the exchanges, I think White's a bit better – his knight is stronger.

**34.Bf4 Ke7 35.g4 Kd7 36.h4 Bf6 37.h5 gxh5 38.gxh5 Nc3 39.Kf3 Na2 40.Bd2! Kc6 41.Kg4 Nb4 42.Bxb4!**

Taking the game into a knight versus bishop endgame, but also creating pawn weaknesses which he'll later exploit.

**42...cxb4 (D)**





**43.Kf4 Bg7 44.Kg5 Kc5 45.Kf4 h6 46.e5!**

Now the black pawn on d4 is doomed.

**46...Kd5 47.Nb6+ Kc6 48.Ke4 Kc5 49.Nc4 Bf8 50.Nd2 Be7 51.Nf3 Kc6 52.Nxd4+ Kd7 53.Nf3 Bd8 54.d4 Bxa5 55.d5 Bb6 56.Nd4 exd5+ 57.Kxd5 Bd8 58.Nf5 Bg5 59.e6+ Kc7 60.Kc5 Bd2 61.Kd5 b6 62.Nd6 Bg5 63.Nc4 Be7 64.Ne5 Bg5 65.Nc6 Bd2 66.Nb8! Kd8**

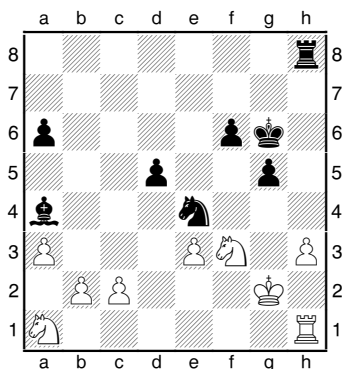
Of course, not 66...Kxb8 67.e7, but if Black tries to save the a-pawn, e6-e7 cuts him off from defending e8.

**67.Nxa6 Ke8 68.Nb8 Be3 69.Nc6 Bc5 70.Nd4**

When the knight goes to f5, one of the pawns will fall. **1-0**



Gerry O'Connell beat English grandmaster Mark Hebdon after the latter made an error on move forty.



**Hebden, M - O'Connell, G**  
**IRL-ch Dublin (2), 01.07.2007**

**40.Rd1?? Rxb3!**

If White recaptures, the knight forks king and rook from f2.

**41.Ng1 Rxe3 42.Rxd5 Bc6 43.Rd4?**

Better is 43.Rd8.

**43...Re1 44.Nb3 Nd2+ 45.Kh2**

Now it's mate in six. Instead, 45.Kf2 Rf1+ 46.Ke3 Nxb3 47.cxb3 Rxb1 would have left Black a clear piece up.

**45...Nf1+**

And White resigned in view of 46.Kh3 Re3+ 47.Nf3 Bxf3 48.Nd2 Bh1+ 49.Nf3 Rxf3+ 50.Kg4 f5# 0-1

Simon Jeffares drew with GM Stewart Conquest after a rook endgame, and was involved in the last game of the round to finish for the second day running!

Play was stopped Wimbledon-style due to rain twice in round three, as the top table was moved to avoid drips from a leaky roof! None of this disturbed top Irish seed, IM Brian Kelly, as he demolished IM Mark Orr in a wild game.

**Kelly, B - Orr, M**

**IRL-ch Dublin (3), 02.07.2007**

*Notes by Mark Orr IM*

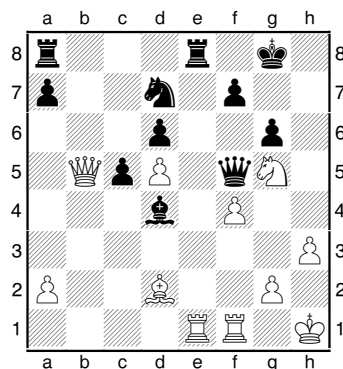


**1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 c5 4.d5 exd5 5.cxd5 d6 6.e4 g6 7.Bd3 Bg7 8.h3 0-0 9.Nf3 b5 10.Nxb5 Re8 11.Nc3 Nxe4 12.Nxe4 Bf5?! 12...f5 13.Bg5 Qd7 14.Nfd2 Ba6 15.Bxa6 Nxa6 16.0-0 fxe4 17.Nc4 Nb4 13.Nfg5! h6 13...Bxe4? 14.Bxe4 h6 15.Ne6 fxe6 16.0-0**

**14.0-0 hxg5 15.Nxg5 Bxd3 16.Qxd3 Nd7 17.f4?! Qe7 18.Bd2**

**18.f5 Qe2 19.Qxe2 Rxe2 20.fxg6 fxg6**

**18...Bxb2 19.Rae1 Qf6 20.Kh1 Qf5! 21.Qb5 Bd4 (D)**



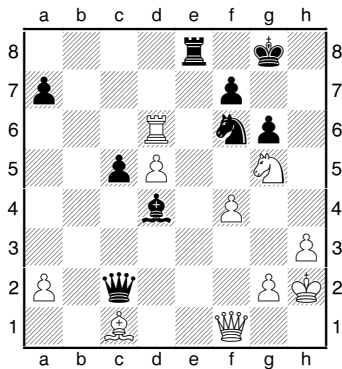
**22.Re6! Nf6!**

**22...fxe6 23.Qxd7 exd5 (23...Bg7 24.dxe6) 24.Qh7+ Kf8 25.g4 Qf6 26.f5 Re7 27.Ne6+ Rxe6 28.Bh6+ Ke8 29.Qg8+ Ke7 30.Qxa8**

**23.Rxd6 Rab8 24.Qa6 Rb1?**

**24...Rb2 25.Qxa7 (25.Bc1 Rc2 26.g4 Ne4! 27.Qa3 Nf2+ or 25.Be1 Qc2 26.Bf2 Nh5 27.Nxf7 Ng3+ 28.Kh2 Nxf1+) 25...Nh5! 26.Re1 Rb1**

25.Kh2 Rxf1 26.Qxf1 Qc2 27.Bc1 (D)



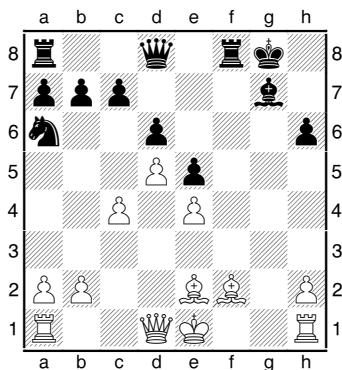
27...Rb8?

27...Bf2 28.Nf3 (28.Rxf6 Re1) 28...Ne4 29.Rc6 Rb8  
 28.Nf3 Ne4 29.Nxd4 cxd4 30.Rc6 Qxa2 31.f5 Qxd5  
 32.fxc6 f5 33.Rc7 d3 34.Qf4 d2 35.Rh7 Qd6  
 35...d1Q 36.Qxb8+ Qd8 37.Qe5  
 36.Qxd6 Nxd6 37.Bxd2 Ne4 38.Be3 a6 39.Ra7 1-0

GM Mark Hebden must have been less than pleased with his form (or luck!) as Peter Cafolla took a draw off him. In truth, Cafolla had him beaten, but I assume he was short of time (and even if he wasn't, I can't blame him for taking the draw against such an illustrious opponent.)

Cafolla,P - Hebden,M  
 IRL-ch Dublin (3), 02.07.2007  
 Notes by John Healy

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.e4 d6 5.Be2 0-0 6.Nf3 e5  
 7.d5 Na6 8.Bg5 h6 9.Bh4 g5 10.Bg3 Nxe4 11.Nxe4 f5  
 12.Nfd2 fxe4 13.Nxe4 Bf5 14.f3 g4 15.Bf2 gxf3 16.gxf3  
 Bxe4 17.fxe4 (D)



17...Rxf2!?

This attack looks promising. While it's awkward to get more pieces to support the queen, White's king is not going to find a haven any time soon.

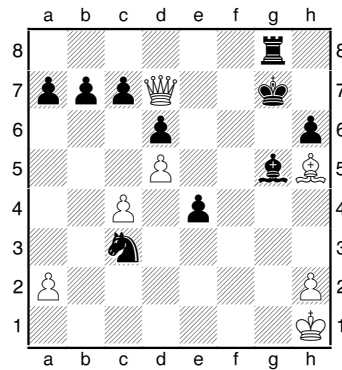
18.Kxf2 Qh4+ 19.Kg2 Qxe4+ 20.Kh3 Qe3+ 21.Kg2 e4  
 22.Rf1 Kh8 23.Bh5 Nb4 24.Rf5 Nd3

I haven't explored all the options for Black in the past few moves, but there are no obvious errors. Here, Hebden might have liquidated with 24...Bxb2 25.Rb1 Rg8+ 26.Kh1 Nd3 27.Qe2 Bd4 28.Qxe3 Bxe3 29.h3 b6

25.Qf1 Qd2+ 26.Kh1 Rg8 27.Rd1 Qxb2 28.Be2 Nc5  
 29.Rf7 Qe5

Black can no longer ignore White's counterplay, e.g. 29...Qxa2? 30.Rxg7! Kxg7 31.Qf4 Qb2 32.Rg1+ Kh7 (32...Kh8?? 33.Qxh6#) 33.Qf7+ gives White the advantage, pawns be damned.

30.Qh3 Qg5 31.Rdf1 Na4 32.R7f4 Nc3 33.Rg4 Qe5  
 34.Rg6 Kh7 35.Rff6 Qxf6 36.Rxf6 Bxf6 37.Qf5+ Kg7  
 38.Bh5 Bg5 39.Qd7+ (D)



And here the players agreed a draw, though I think White can play for the win safely enough, e.g. 39...Kh8 40.Bf7 e3 (40...Rg7 41.Qe8+ Kh7 42.Be6) 41.Bxg8 Kxg8 42.h4 Bf6 43.Qe6+ Kg7 44.Qxe3 1/2-1/2

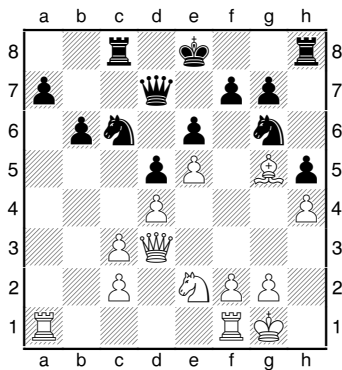


With the grandmasters dropping points, the stage was set for an Irishman to *carpe pignus*. Brian Kelly stormed into sole lead with a delicate win in a R+P endgame against Stephen Jessel. There was no luck for the Irish against the 4 GMs who all won their games.

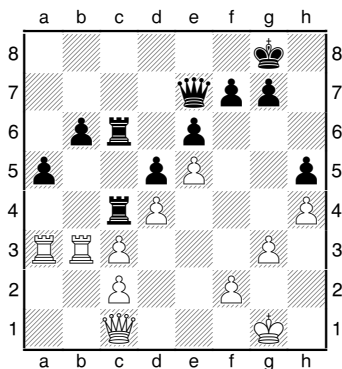
Jessel,S - Kelly,B  
 IRL-ch Dublin (4), 03.07.2007

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e5 Ne7 5.a3 Bxc3+ 6.bxc3  
 b6 7.Qg4 Ng6 8.h4 h5 9.Qg3 Ba6 10.Bxa6 Nxa6 11.Bg5  
 Qd7 12.a4 Nb8 13.Ne2 Nc6 14.0-0 Nce7 15.Qd3 Rc8  
 16.a5 Nc6 17.axb6 cxb6 (D)

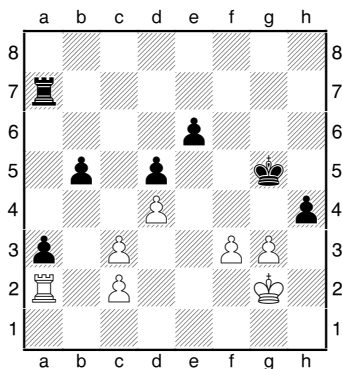




18.Ra2 Rc7 19.Rfa1 Na5 20.Nc1 Ne7 21.Bxe7 Qxe7 22.g3 0-0 23.Nb3 Nc4 24.Nd2 a5 25.Rb1 Nxd2 26.Qxd2 Rc6 27.Rb3 Rfc8 28.Raa3 Rc4 (D)

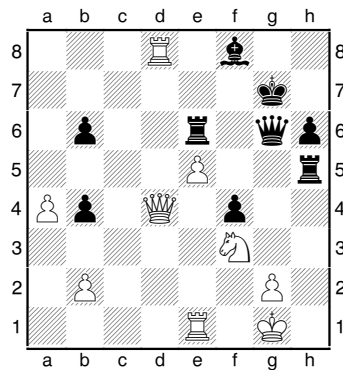


29.Qc1 R8c6 30.Qa1 g6 31.Ra4 Qc7 32.Rxc4 Rxc4 33.Qb2 Rc6 34.Qa1 Kg7 35.Kg2 Qc8 36.Kg1 Qa6 37.Qf1 Qxf1+ 38.Kxf1 f6 39.exf6+ Kxf6 40.Ke2 g5 41.hxg5+ Kxg5 42.Kf3 a4 43.Ra3 b5 44.Kg2 Ra6 45.Kf3 Ra8 46.Ra2 a3 47.Kg2 Kg4 48.f3+ Kg5 49.Kh3 Ra7 50.Kg2 h4 (D)



51.Kh3 hxg3 52.Kxg3 Kf5 53.Kf2 Kf4 54.Ke2  
The decisive mistake? 54.Rxa3 looks better. (JH)  
54...Ra8 55.Kf2 Rh8 56.Ke2 Rh2+ 57.Kd3 Rf2 58.Rxa3 Rxf3+ 59.Kd2 b4 0-1

In round 5, Kelly quickly draw with GM Nick Pert. GM Stuart Conquest beat FM Phillip Short to share the lead on 4½ points. John Redmond again proved a thorn in a grandmaster's side (again using Bird's Opening!), holding Mark Hebden to a draw.



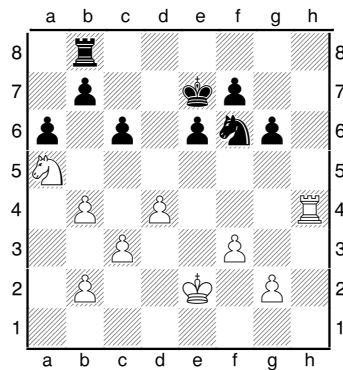
Redmond, J. - Hebden, M.  
IRL-ch, Dublin (5), 04.07.2007

43.Rxf8 Kxf8 44.Qxb4+ Kg7 45.a5 bxa5 46.Qxa5 Qe8 47.Qc7+ Re7 48.Qc3 Qb8 49.Qd4 Qa7 50.Re4 Qxd4+ 51.Rxd4 Rf5 52.Kf2 Rf8 53.Ke2 Kg6 54.Kd3 Kf5 55.Rd6 Rb7 56.Rxh6 Rxb2 57.Rh5+ Kg6 58.Rg5+ Kh6 59.Ke4 Rb4+ 60.Kd5 Rd8+ 61.Ke6 Rb6+ 62.Kf5 Rf8+ 1/2-1/2



Simon Jeffares got top seed GM Rozentalis to a rook and knight endgame, but was tied down and quickly ran out of ideas. Rozentalis slowly crushed him.

Rozentalis, E - Jeffares, S  
IRL-ch Dublin (5), 04.07.2007



29.Kd3 Ke7 30.g4 Kd7 31.Rh6 Ke7 32.g5 Nd7 33.f4 Nb6 34.Rh7 Nd7 35.Ke3 Nb6 36.Ke4 Nd7 37.c4 Nb6 38.b3 Nd7 39.c5 Nf8 40.Rh8 Nd7 41.Rxb8 Nxb8 42.Nxb7 Nd7 43.Na5 Nb8 44.Kd3 Kd7 45.Nc4 Ke7 46.Ne5 Kf8 47.Kc3 Ke7 48.Kb2 f6 49.Ng4 Nd7 50.Ka3 1-0

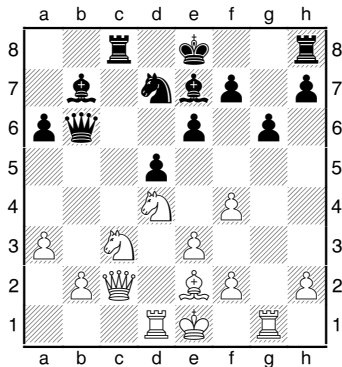
15 year old Sam Osborne defeated FM Colm Daly in a marathon 91-move, seven hour game, in which Sam at one point announced checkmate, only to have Daly take his *en prise* rook. Sam went on to win the resulting QvR endgame.

Brian Kelly's win as Black over Stuart Conquest really made it look like his tournament to lose. Not only did he

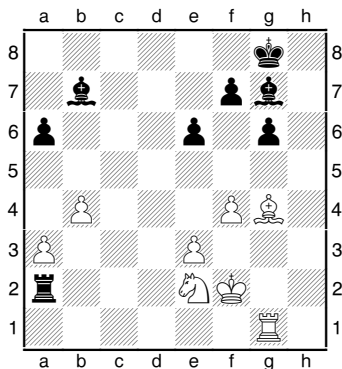
retake the sole lead, a half point ahead of Pert and Rozentalis, but people started talking about the possibility of a GM norm.

**Conquest,S - Kelly,B**  
**IRL-ch Dublin (6), 05.07.2007**

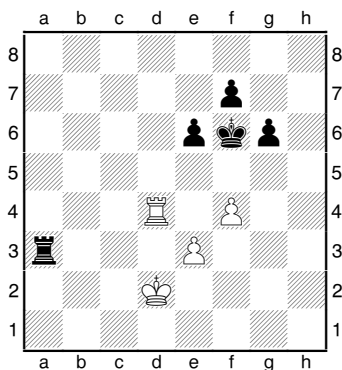
1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Nf3 a6 5.c5 Nbd7 6.Bf4 Nh5 7.Bd2 Nhf6 8.Bf4 Nh5 9.g3 Nxf4 10.gxf4 b6 11.cxb6 Qxb6 12.Qc2 e6 13.e3 c5 14.Be2 cxd4 15.Nxd4 Bb7 16.a3 Rc8 17.Rg1 g6 18.Rd1 Be7 (D)



19.Kf1 Rc7 20.Qd2 Qd6 21.Nf3 0-0 22.h4 Nb6 23.h5 Qd8 24.hxg6 hxg6 25.Ne5 Bf6 26.Qc2 Bg7 27.Bg4 Qe7 28.Qe2 Ne4 29.Nxc4 Rxc4 30.Qd2 d4 31.Ne2 dxe3 32.fxe3 Rfc8 33.Qd7 Qxd7 34.Rxd7 R4c7 35.Rd2 Rc2 36.Rd7 R2c7 37.Rxc7 Rxc7 38.b4 Rc2 39.Kf2 Ra2 (D)



40.Bf3 Bxf3 41.Kxf3 Rxa3 42.Rb1 Bf8 43.Nd4 Kg7 44.Ke2 Rc3 45.Ra1 Bxb4 46.Rxa6 Bc5 47.Ra4 Kf6 48.Kd2 Bxd4 49.Rxd4 Ra3 (D)



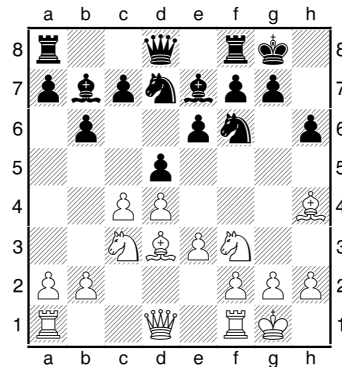
50.Ke2 e5 51.Rd6+ Kf5 52.fxe5 Kxe5 53.Rb6 Kf5

54.Rb7 f6 55.Kf3 g5 56.Rb5+ Kg6 57.Rb6 Ra1 58.Rb8 f5 59.Rg8+ Kf6 60.Rf8+ Ke6 61.Re8+ Kf7 62.Rb8 g4+ 63.Kf2 Ra2+ 64.Kg3 Re2 65.Kf4 Rf2+ 66.Kg5 Rf3 67.Rb6 g3 68.Rf6+ Ke7 69.Rg6 Rf1 70.Kh6 Rh1+ 71.Kg7 Rh4 0-1

Mark Hebden won beautifully against Tony Fox in a study-like ending.

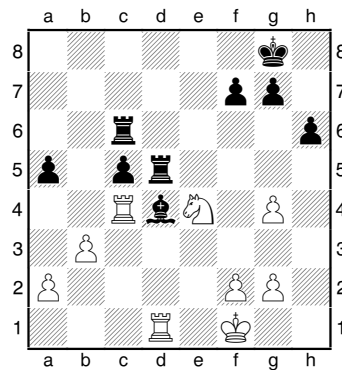
**Hebden,M - Fox,A**  
**IRL-ch Dublin (6), 05.07.2007**  
*Notes by John Healy*

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 Nf6 4.Bg5 Be7 5.Nc3 0-0 6.e3 h6 7.Bh4 b6 8.Bd3 Bb7 9.0-0 Nbd7 (D)



Queen's Gambit Declined, Tartakower variation. I've no database at the moment, and I don't know the opening well, but this all looks fairly normal.

10.Bg3 c5 11.Qe2 Ne4 12.cxd5 exd5 13.Rac1 Nxc3 14.hxg3 Nf6 15.dxc5 bxc5 16.Rfd1 Qb6 17.b3 Rfd8 18.e4 dxe4 19.Nxe4 Nxe4 20.Bxe4 Bxe4 21.Qxe4 Bf6 22.Re1 Rac8 23.Re2 Qb5 24.Rec2 Rc7 25.Qc4 Rb8 26.Qf4 Rbc8 27.Rc4 a5 28.g4 Qd7 29.Re1 Rc6 30.Qd2 Qxd2 31.Nxd2 Rd8 32.Ne4 Bd4 33.Kf1 Rd5 34.Rd1 (D)



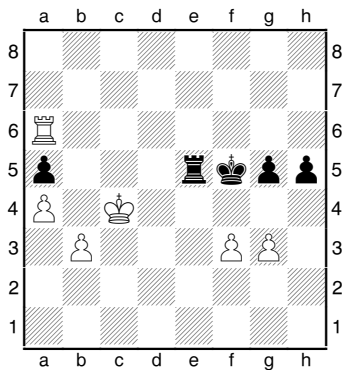
34...Kf8?

Black makes his first serious error. Necessary was 34...Re5. Now, White emerges a clear pawn up in a rook endgame after

35.Nxc5! Rxc5 36.Rxc5 Rxc5 37.Rxd4 Ke7 38.Ke2 f5 39.gxf5 Rxf5 40.Ke3 Ke6 41.Rd8 h5 42.Ra8!

Tying Black's rook to the fifth rank.

42...Rb5 43.g3 Kf5 44.f3 g5 45.Ra6 Re5+ 46.Kd4 Rb5 47.Kc4 Re5 48.a4 (D)



I'll just pause here to marvel at how Hebden's tied Black in knots here. I suppose you could call this zugzwang, as with rook and king unable to move, Black must make a fatally weakening pawn move.

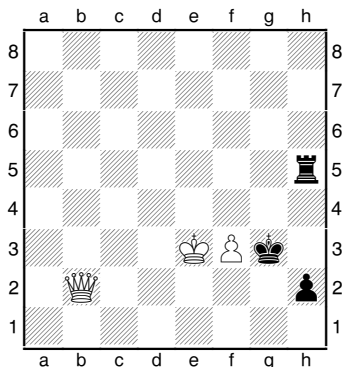
**48...h4**

48...g4 49.f4 Re3 50.Rxa5+ Kg6 51.Rg5+ Kh6 52.a5 is a comfortable win for White.

**49.gxh4 gxh4 50.Kd4!**

Oh, and by the way, Black has to lose his a-pawn too.

**50...Re1 51.Rxa5+ Kf4 52.Rh5 Kg3 53.a5 h3 54.b4 h2 55.b5 Ra1 56.b6 Rxa5 57.b7 Rxh5 58.b8Q+ Kf2 59.Qb2+ Kg3 60.Qb8+ Kf2 61.Qb2+ Kg3 62.Ke3 (D)**

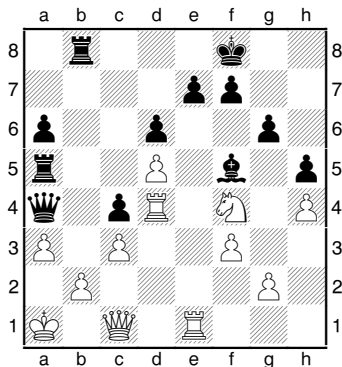


**62...Rh7**

62...h1Q 63.Qg7+ Kh2 64.Kf2 – Mark Orr

**63.Qb8+ Kh3 64.Qc8+ Kg2 65.Qg8+ 1-0**

Kelly's round seven clash with Rozentalis was a draw, and Glienke held Pert. Conquest and Short both won to join Pert and Rozentalis a half point behind Kelly.



**Jessel,S - Conquest,S**  
**IRL-ch (7), 06.07.2007**

**27.Qd1??**

27.g4 hxg4 28.fxc4=

**27...Rb3!**

Missing 27...Qxa3+!! 28.bxa3 Rxa3#

**28.Re2**

28.Qc1 delays mate for a good number of moves, but it's a simple win for Black.

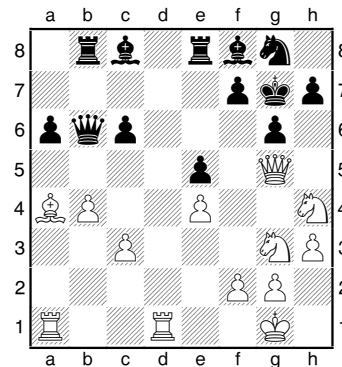
**28...Rxa3+ 0-1**

In round eight, Kelly drew again, this time with FM Philip Short. Pert beat Conquest, which left Kelly and Pert in joint first with one round left.

**Pert,N - Conquest,S**

**IRL-ch Dublin (8), 07.07.2007**

1.d4 g6 2.e4 Bg7 3.Nc3 d6 4.Be3 c6 5.Nf3 Nf6 6.h3 0-0 7.Qd2 b5 8.Bd3 Nbd7 9.0-0 e5 10.dxe5 dxe5 11.Ne2 a6 12.a4 Rb8 13.Ng3 Qe7 14.Rfd1 Re8 15.c3 Nc5 16.Bc2 bxa4 17.Bxc5 Qxc5 18.Bxa4 Bf8 19.b4 Qb6 20.Qg5 Kg7 21.Nh4 Ng8 (D)



22.Ngf5+ Bxf5 23.Nxf5+ Kh8 24.Nd6 Re7 25.Bb3 Bh6 26.Qg4 Rf8 27.Nc8 f5 28.Nxb6 fxc4 29.Bxc8 1-0

Mark Hebden continued his resurgence with a quick (though complicated) win over Colm Daly. I was going to annotate this game until I found the line 12...cxb2+ 13.Kxb2 e6 14.e5 Rxd1 15.Rxd1 Nbd7 16.Nxe6!!+-. I give up. Really, I do.

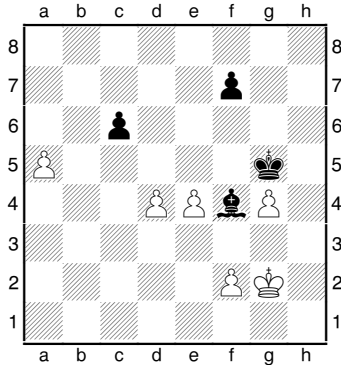
**Hebden,M - Daly,C**

**IRL-ch Dublin (8), 07.07.2007**

1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 g6 3.Nc3 d5 4.Bf4 Bg7 5.Qd2 0-0 6.Bh6 Bxh6 7.Qxh6 c5 8.dxc5 Qa5 9.0-0-0 Rd8 10.Ng5 d4 11.e4 dxc3 12.Bc4 Nc6 13.Bxf7+ Kh8 14.Bb3 Ne5 15.f4 Bg4 16.fxe5 Rxd1+ 17.Rxd1 cxb2+ 18.Kxb2 Qxc5 19.exf6 Qe5+ 20.c3 1-0

Gearóidín Uí Laighléis was fighting for a draw against Stephen Short when suddenly a shock pawn move

unexpectedly finished him off by cutting his bishop off from an advancing pawn.



Ui Laighleis, G - Short, S

IRL-ch Dublin (8), 07.07.2007

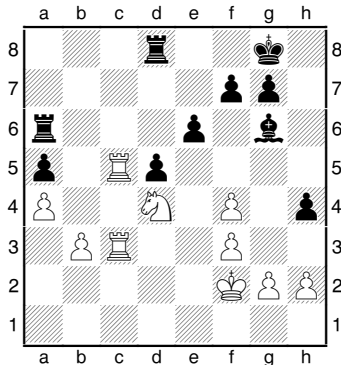
51...Kxg4?? 52.e5! c5 53.dxc5 Bxe5 54.a6 1-0

There was great drama in the last round. Brian Kelly, needing a draw for a GM norm, unfortunately could not stop the in-form Mark Hebden. With Pert and Rozentalis drawing, that meant Hebden and Pert shared first place and Brian was joint third and assured of at least a share of the title of Irish Champion, depending on the result of one other game - Philip Short versus Stephen Brady. This tense encounter was the last game to finish and involved more than one time scramble but eventually Stephen, who had the edge in a long bishop and pawn endgame, emerged victorious and thus shared the title with Brian.

Hebden, M - Kelly, B

IRL-ch Dublin (9), 08.07.2007

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.Nf3 Nf6 4.e3 Bf5 5.cxd5 cxd5 6.Qb3 Qc7 7.Bd2 e6 8.Bb5+ Nc6 9.0-0 Bd6 10.Bb4 0-0 11.Bxc6 bxc6 12.Nbd2 Nd7 13.Rfc1 Rfb8 14.Bxd6 Qxd6 15.Qc3 a5 16.Nb3 Rb4 17.a3 Rb5 18.a4 Rb4 19.Ne5 Nxe5 20.dxe5 Qb8 21.Nd4 Qxe5 22.Qxc6 Rbb8 23.Rc5 Be4 24.Rac1 h5 25.R1c3 h4 26.f3 Bg6 27.b3 Qg5 28.Qd6 Rd8 29.Qf4 Qxf4 30.exf4 Ra6 31.Kf2 (D)



When I saw the position after White's 31st move, I thought that he surely had enough for the draw. Shows what I know (JH) - Hebden made those powerful rooks tell.

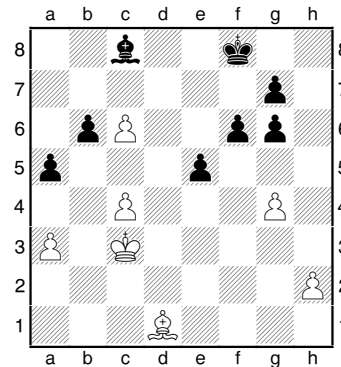
31...f6 32.Rc7 Be8 33.Re7 Bf7 34.Rcc7 Rf8 35.Ke3 Rb6 36.Kd2 g5 37.fxcg5 fxcg5 38.Kc3 Rd6 39.Nc6 1-0

While it's a shame that Brian didn't make his GM norm on this occasion, it's great that he (and other Irish players) had the possibility to make norms as well as a shots against GM opposition (which several players made the most of). All this was made possible by the sponsor (thanks again!) and the adoption of an open format which we can all be grateful is planned to continue next year\*.

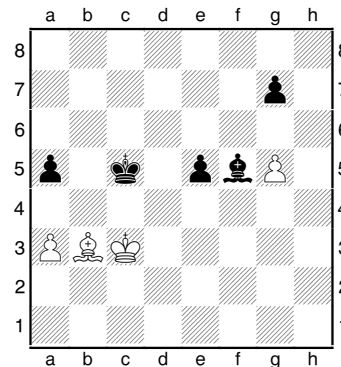
Short, P - Brady, S

IRL-ch Dublin (9), 08.07.2007

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 b6 4.a3 Ba6 5.Qc2 Bb7 6.Nc3 c5 7.e4 cxd4 8.Nxd4 Bc5 9.Nb3 Nc6 10.Bf4 e5 11.Be3 Bxe3 12.fxe3 0-0 13.Be2 Ng4 14.Qd2 Qg5 15.Nd5 Nf6 16.Nxf6+ Qxf6 17.0-0 Nd8 18.Qxd7 Bxe4 19.Qg4 Qg6 20.Qxg6 hxg6 21.Rhg1 Rc8 22.Nd2 Bf5 23.b4 a5 24.Kb2 Nc6 25.Kc3 Rc7 26.Nf3 f6 27.Rd6 Kf7 28.b5 Ne7 29.Rgd1 Rb8 30.Nd2 Be6 31.Ne4 Nf5 32.Rc6 Rxc6 33.bxc6 Rc8 34.g4 Nxe3 35.Nd6+ Kf8 36.Nxc8 Nxd1+ 37.Bxd1 Bxc8 (D)



38.e5 b5 39.Be2 Ke7 40.Bxb5 Kd8 41.Be2 Kc7 42.Bf3 Be6 43.h4 f5 44.g5 Ba2 45.Kb2 Bc4 46.Kc3 Bb5 47.Bd5 Be2 48.Bf7 Bh5 49.Bd5 Bg4 50.Bf7 f4 51.Bxg6 f3 52.Be4 f2 53.Bg2 Be2 54.h5 Bxh5 55.Kd2 Bf3 56.Bf1 Kxc6 57.Ke3 Bd5 58.Kxf2 Kxc5 59.Ke3 Kd6 60.Ba6 Bg2 61.Bc4 Bh3 62.Ba6 Bf5 63.Be2 Bb1 64.Bc4 Kc5 65.Bb3 Kb5 66.Kf3 Bd3 67.Ke3 Bc4 68.Bd1 Bd5 69.Kd3 Kc5 70.Ba4 Bb7 71.Bb3 Bc6 72.Bc2 Be8 73.Bb3 Bg6+ 74.Ke3 Bf5 75.Bf7 Bc2 76.Kd2 Be4 77.Kc3 Bf5 78.Bb3 (D)



78...e4 79.Bc4 e3 80.Be2 Bd7 81.Bf3 Bb5 82.a4 Ba6 0-1

\* For a dissenting voice, see Letters to the Editor.

## Cork Congress

Michael Bradley

Over 160 players made the journey to Cork over the weekend of the 30<sup>th</sup> March to 1<sup>st</sup> April in the Metropole Hotel. For the masters section, we had the pleasure of welcoming three GM players, namely Stuart Conquest of England who lives in Spain, Alex Baburin of Russia living in Ireland and Harmen Jonkman, who does so much travelling we could suggest the airport is where he resides!! In addition, we had some players making the journey from Germany, France and England. Local hopes were on young FM Alex Lopez who plays for Douglas.

The format of the traditional three sections was altered slightly to accommodate the more ambitious players close to the threshold. Players over 1500 could play up to the masters (1600+) and those over 1150 could play up to the majors (1200-1600). This was well received by all who took advantage of it and may become a regular feature for the congress. The Masters section had over 60 players as a result.

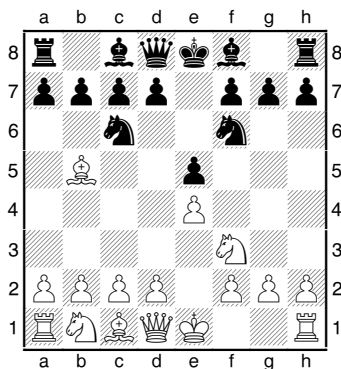
In the masters almost all results went with seed in round one. Cork player Paul O'Donovan had nice win over Michael Hansch, over 300 rating points above him. Round two produced two great results for Cork players David Path and Stephen Short. Both players drew with GMs Conquest and Jonkman, in slight time trouble David did have the opportunity to convert for a full point but would not complain about a draw with a GM (I suspect) if offered at the start of the game. Stephen played very well and deservedly got a draw.

**Short,S - Jonkman,H [C67]**  
**Cork Congress 2007 (2), 2007**

*Annotations by John Healy*

**1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 Nf6 (D)**

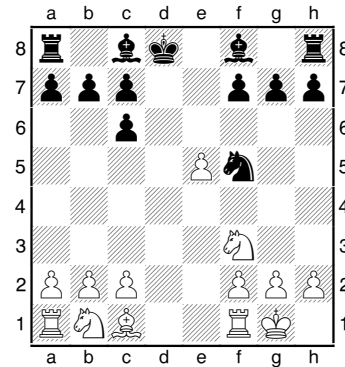
This is the Berlin Defense, the profile of which was raised when Kramnik used it against Kasparov in their 2000 match.



**4.0-0 Nxe4 5.d4 Nd6 6.Bxc6 dxc6 7.dxe5 Nf5 8.Qxd8+ Kxd8 (D)**

White has an important extra kingside pawn, and Black

can't castle. By way of compensation, Black has the bishop-pair and no obvious weaknesses.



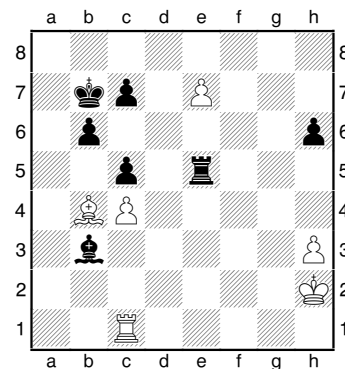
**9.Nbd2**

9.Nc3 is nearly always played here, e.g. 9...Bd7 10.b3 h6 11.Bb2 Kc8 12.h3 was game one of that Kasparov-Kramnik match.

**9...h6 10.b3 a5 11.Bb2 a4 12.c4?!**

With the light squared bishop still on the board, this is committal.

**12...Be6 13.Rfd1 Kc8 14.Nd4 Nxd4 15.Bxd4 b6 16.h3 Bb4 17.Ne4 Bf5 18.Bc3 Bxe4 19.Bxb4 Bc2 20.Rdc1 axb3 21.axb3 Rxa1 22.Rxa1 Kb7 23.Rc1 Bxb3 24.f4 g6 25.g4 Ra8 26.f5 gxf5 27.gxf5 Rg8+ 28.Kh2 Rg5 29.e6 fxe6 30.fxe6 c5 31.e7 Re5 (D)**



**32.Re1?**

Missing 32.Bxc5! bxc5 33.Rb1 Rxe7 34.Rxb3+ Kc6, which White can probably hold.

**32...Rxe1?**

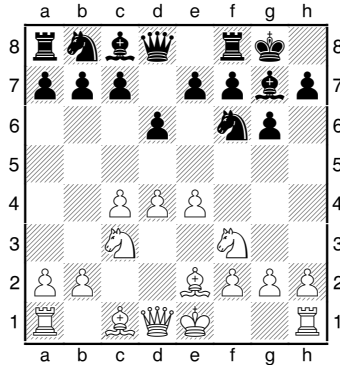
It looks like 32...Rxe1! 33.Rxe7 cxb4 is winning, as it may not be possible to stop Black's queenside pawns. In order to prevent ...Bc2 and ...b3, White has to give up his c pawn. After the text, it's very hard to win.

**33.Bxe1 Ba4 34.Bd2 h5 35.Kg3 Kc8 36.Kf2 Kd7 37.Bf4 c6 38.Bc7 b5 39.Bd6 b4 40.Bxc5 b3 41.Ba3 c5 42.Ke2 Ke6 43.Ke3 Kf6 44.Kf4 Be8 45.Bxc5 b2 46.Bd4+ Kxe7 47.Bxb2 Kd6 48.Bd4**

1/2-1/2

Path,D (1920) - Conquest,S (2560) [E94]  
Cork Congress 2007 Cork (2), 31.03.2007  
Annotations by GM Stuart Conquest<sup>1</sup>

1.Nf3 g6 2.c4 Bg7 3.e4 d6 4.d4 Nf6 5.Nc3 0-0 6.Be2 (D)



I almost never play the King's Indian, but in weekenders and quickplays I like to try out different stuff. In this game this dangerous strategy backfires! Here, for example, on the standard 6...e5 I was worried he might exchange Queens, but a habitual KI player would not be concerned about this.

**6...Nbd7 7.0-0 e5 8.Be3 Ng4 9.Bg5 f6**

9...Qe8? 10.Nd5 wins. Black needs his knight coming to a6 to play with ...Qe8.

**10.Bc1**

I expected 10.Bh4 P.S. I've just discovered I once had this as Black against a GM! It was versus I.Farago, and I'll give the next few moves: 10...Nh6 11.Qd2 (not the best square!) 11...Nf7 12.Rad1 c6 13.h3 (why?) 13...a5 14.Qc2 (!) 14...Qe7 and now the game became wild: 15.c5 dxc5 16.dxe5 b5 (best, according to the notes I made at the time: White intended Nc3-a4) 17.exf6 Bxf6 18.Bg3 and I eventually blundered a piece and lost, having at one point not heard a draw offer (!), in Farago-Conquest, Hastings Masters 1990.

**10...Kh8**

A rare move here (10...Nh6 is most popular), but not a bad one: there are for example two old games by strong E.German (at the time) GM Knaak.

**11.h3 Nh6 12.Be3 Nf7**

This didn't feel too bad for me, but of course White is better. 12...f5? 13.Bg5! causes problems.

**13.Qc2!**

Simple and strong: White prevents ...f5.

**13...c6 14.Rfd1 Qe7 15.b4**

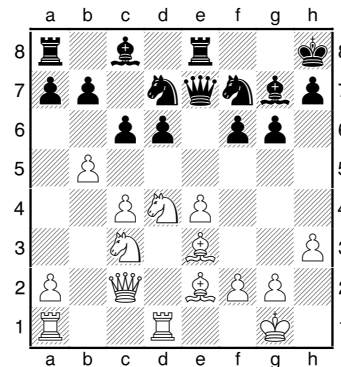
Black is cramped and has few options. I decided to release the tension now, because I didn't like 15...Re8 16.d5, and then if 16...c5 17.Nb5! [P.S. Having just looked at some games in this line, the move 15...Bh6 suggests itself. I don't recall thinking of this at the board.]

**15...exd4!? 16.Nxd4 Re8**

One idea is ...Nd7-f8-e6.

<sup>1</sup> When one of the editors asked GM Conquest for permission to republish these notes, he spoke very highly of the organizers of the Cork Congress, saying that they'd treated him very well. It's nice to hear positive feedback like this!

17.b5!? (D)



White strikes before Black's bishop can reach d7, but this is also a fairly committal decision, and I wasn't displeased to see it..

**17...Nd8!**

Played in the ungainly style of Petrosian - a great hero of mine!

**18.Bf4 Ne5 19.a4**

I think I would have chosen Rab1 here or on the previous move.

**19...Be6**

At last the bishop gets out! I think I expected 20.Nxe6 here. Certainly Dave's move came as a surprise.

**20.Na2!? Bg8**

Played in the spirit of: "that will teach him not to take my bishops." I was starting to feel optimistic.

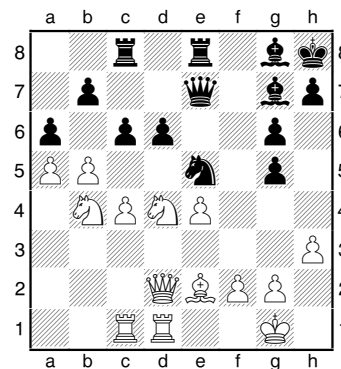
**21.Rac1 Rc8 22.Qd2 Ndf7 23.a5 a6**

An undesirable weakness, but a5-a6 was annoying.

**24.Nb4 Ng5**

I had this one ready: Black threatens ...c5 as well as ...Nxe4.

**25.Bxg5 fxg5 (D)**



Look at my new bishop! I was so pleased that I dropped my guard.

**26.bxc6 bxc6 27.Nf3!**

I hadn't seen this. Worse, I was running short of time, and needed to move quite fast.

**27...Nxf3+**

Petrosian would have found 27...Nf7! here. Much later (days, not hours) this move came to me in my head - it's funny how these things happen.

**28.Bxf3**

Here I thought: 28...Be5 (obvious) 29.Nd3 (obvious) Bf6

(obvious) 30.Nb4 (obvious, but maybe 30.c5 is good) Red8 (obvious) and I'm okay. Then I thought, well, why not just go 28...Red8 first? Then if 29.Nxa6 (obvious) I have ...Qa7 (or perhaps ...c5). So then I just played the move. I hadn't much time, but those were pretty much my thought processes.

**28...Red8?? 29.Bg4**

Of course. No sooner had the rook left my hand than I saw Bg4 screaming out at me.

**29...Be6**

29...Rc7 30.Nxa6

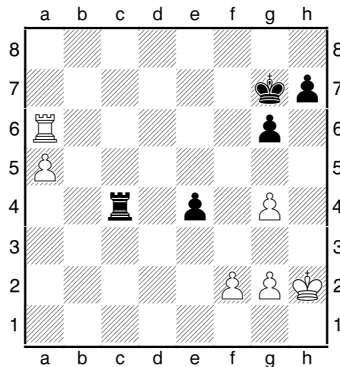
**30.Bxe6 Qxe6 31.Qxg5 Rd7**

31...Qxe4 32.Re1 Qf5 (32...Qd4? 33.Nxc6) 33.Qxf5 gxf5 34.Nxa6 was also pretty depressing. It's hard to make objective choices when one's position is falling apart.

**32.Qg4 Qxg4 33.hxg4 Rb7 34.Nd3 c5!? 35.Rb1 Rcb8 36.Rxb7 Rxb7 37.e5?**

37.Nxc5! won a second pawn. Black would be hopelessly lost in that case.

**37...Bxe5 38.Nxe5 dxe5 39.Rd5 e4 40.Rxc5 Kg7 41.Rc6 Rb4 42.Kh2 Ra4 43.Rxa6 Rxc4 (D)**



A lot more happened. It's a bit pointless to analyse this rook ending (we were both in time-trouble by now), since White had an easy win a few moves back. I was very fortunate not to lose this game. I didn't play too badly up to 27.Nf3, but I played too slowly. Dave played well and never stood worse: he kept the pressure up when it mattered. 1/2-1/2

GM Alex Baburin and FM Alex Lopez made very solid starts and indeed drew their meeting.

**Baburin,A (2545) - Lopez,A (2337) [E12]**

**Cork Chess Congress (4), 31.03.2007**

Annotations by GM Alexander Baburin

([www.chesstoday.net](http://www.chesstoday.net))

**1.d4 b6 2.c4 Bb7 3.Nc3 Nf6 (D)**

**4.Nf3**

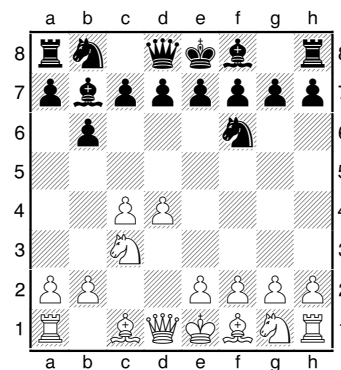
This is not the most ambitious plan - White simply develops pieces, not avoiding transformation to the Queen's Indian Defence. The critical lines are 4.Qc2 and 4.d5

**4...e6 5.a3**

Now we have one of the main positions of the Petrosian Variation of the Queen's Indian Defence.

**5...d5**

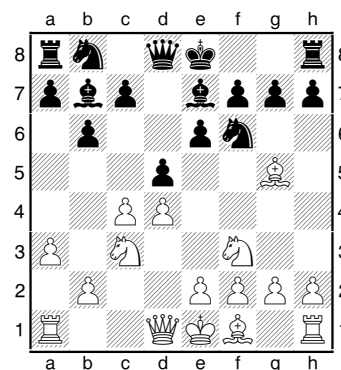
Also possible, but less popular here is 5...Ne4



**6.Bg5**

The main line runs 6.cxd5 Nxd5 7.Qc2 As I don't usually play the Queen's Indian Defence, I knew little about this position. But I suspected that my young opponent knew even less!

**6...Be7 (D)**



This position resembles the Tartakower-Makagonov-Bondarevsky variation of the QGD [1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5 Be7 5.e3 0-0 6.Nf3 h6 7.Bh4 b6 - ed.]. However, there are small differences: 1) Black has not included ...h6; 2) Black has already committed his light-squared bishop to b7. In case of cxd5 exd5 this bishop might be better off on e6; 3) White has spent time on a2-a3, which may or may not be a very useful move.

**7.e3**

Black has few problems after 7.cxd5 Nxd5 8.Bxe7 Qxe7 9.Nxd5 Bxd5 10.Rc1 0-0 11.e3 Rc8 12.Bd3 c5 13.dxc5 Rxc5 14.Rxc5 Qxc5 15.Qb1 h6 16.0-0 Nd7 T.Petrosian-Polugaevsky, Moscow 1969.

For White it makes sense to exchange the f6-knight: 7.Bxf6 Bxf6 8.cxd5 exd5 9.g3 leads to complicated game, for example: 9...0-0 10.Bg2 Qe7 11.0-0 Rd8 12.e3 c5 13.Rc1 Na6 14.Qc2 Rac8 15.Rfd1 Nc7 16.Qa4 Ra8 17.dxc5 bxc5 18.Ne1 a5 19.Nd3 Bxc3 20.Rxc3 Ne6 21.Nf4 Nxf4 22.Qxf4 Ra6 23.Rdc1 Rf6 24.Qg5 h6 25.Qh5 g6 26.Qe2 d4 27.Rxc5 Bxg2 28.Kxg2 dxe3 29.fxe3 1/2-1/2 Kharitonov-Ehlvest, Lvov 1984.

Currently the most popular move here is 7.Qa4+ c6 (After 7...Qd7 8.Qxd7+ Nbx7 9.Nb5 Kd8 10.cxd5 Nxd5 11.e4 N5f6 12.Bf4 Ne8 13.Bd3 White's chances were better in the game van Wely-Karpov, Groningen 1995.) 8.Bxf6 Bxf6 9.cxd5 exd5 10.g3 This is White's idea - he closed the

b7-bishop. Of course, Black can later play ...c5, but that will commit him to hanging pawns - and Qa4 might be a useful extra tempo. One game continued: 10...0-0 11.Bg2 c5 12.0-0 Bc6 13.Qd1 Na6 14.Qd2 Re8 15.Rad1 Boensch-C.Hansen, Tilburg 1994.

**7...Nbd7**

More accurate was 7...0-0 but Black was afraid of Bxf6 Bxf6, cxd5, so he wanted to recapture on f6 with the knight.

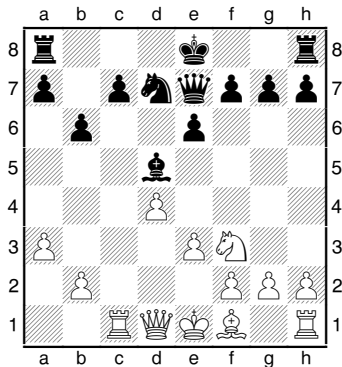
**8.cxd5!**

Now it's time to take on d5.

**8...Nxd5**

Of course, also possible is 8...exd5 However, the general consensus is that such positions are in White's favour. Here is a curious example: 9.Bd3 0-0 10.0-0 Ne4 11.Bf4 c5 12.Rc1 a6 13.Qc2 f5 14.dxc5 bxc5 15.Rfd1 Qc8 16.b4 cxb4 17.axb4 Bxb4 18.Na2 Ba3 19.Qb1 Bxc1 20.Rxc1 Ndc5 21.Bxe4 dxe4 22.Nd4 Bd5 23.Nb4 Qb7 24.Rxc5 Rfc8 25.Rxd5 Qxb4 26.Qd1 Qa4 27.Rd8+ Kf7 28.Qh5+ 1-0 Vaganian-Karpov, Leningrad 1970.

**9.Nxd5 Bxd5 10.Bxe7 Qxe7 11.Rc1 (D)**



This is the point of taking on move 8 - and the reason why 7...0-0 might be more accurate. Now Black has to spend time defending the c7-pawn.

**11...Qd6**

I had no clue whether this position was known to the theory, but I suspected that it occurred before. Here is one example: 11...c5 12.Bb5 (Perhaps more promising is 12.dxc5!?) 12...0-0 13.Bxd7 Qxd7 14.dxc5 Qb7 15.Qe2 bxc5 16.0-0 Rfc8 17.Rfd1 Rab8 18.Rd2 h6 Boensch-Vladimirov, Cienfuegos 1986.

**12.Qc2 c5 13.dxc5**

While annotating this game I came across the following encounter: 13.e4 Bb7 14.Bb5 0-0 15.0-0 Rac8 16.Qa4 Rfd8 17.Rfd1 cxd4 18.Rxc8 Bxc8 19.Qxd4 Qxd4 20.Rxd4 f6 21.Rd6 e5 22.Nh4 Kf8 23.h3 g6 24.Bxd7 Bxd7 25.Rxf6+ Ke7 26.Rf3 Bc6 27.Re3 Rd1+ 28.Kh2 Rd2 29.Nf3 Rxf2 30.Nxe5 Bb7 31.b4± Rf4 32.Rf3 g5 33.Rxf4 gxf4 34.Nd3 Bxe4 35.Nxf4 Kd6 36.g4 Kc6 37.Ne2 Bd3 38.Nf4 Bc4 39.g5 Kb5 40.h4 Ka4 41.h5 Kxa3 42.h6 Kxb4 43.g6 1-0 Vaganian-I.Farago, Graz 1972.

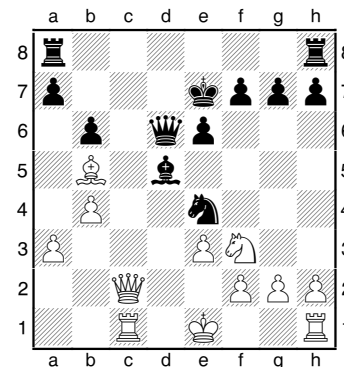
**13...Nxc5**

After 13...Qxc5 White has 14.Qd2! which gives him serious initiative.

**14.Bb5+**

Also very promising is 14.b4 Nd7 (or 14...Ne4 15.Bd3) 15.e4 Bb7 16.Bb5

**14...Ke7 15.b4 Ne4 (D)**



**16.Qc7+?**

My decision was strongly influenced by the fact that, like many juniors, Alex Lopez does not like play endings - and that in our previous games I outplayed him exactly in simplified positions. Perhaps here I rushed too much and after the simple move 16.0-0 White could get more, for example: 16...a6 (or 16...Rhc8 17.Qxc8 Rxc8 18.Rxc8 a5 19.bxa5 bxa5 20.a4) 17.Bd3 Rhc8 18.Qb2

**16...Kf6!**

My Junior 8 is optimistic about Black's chances in the line 16...Qxc7 17.Rxc7+ Kf6 18.Ba6 but I was happy to take White here, though I was probably overestimating White's chances.

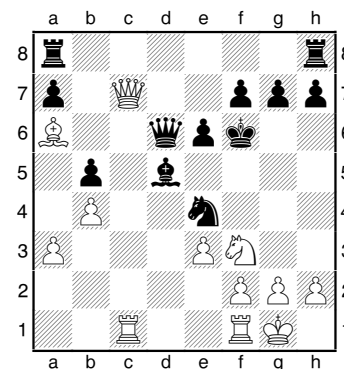
**17.Ba6**

White fights for the c-file and tries to keep the a8-rook locked up. Of course, the line 17.0-0 Qxc7 18.Rxc7 a5 would be fine for Black.

**17...b5**

Again, this is a 'human' decision. But it seems that Black could and should go for 17...Qxc7 18.Rxc7 Nd6 19.0-0 b5 20.Nd4 Rhb8 where he is fine.

**18.0-0 (D)**



Correct was 18.Qa5! where Black would have yet to find the best line: 18...Rhb8 19.Bxb5 Qb6! - Black has enough play for a pawn, thanks to his better development, for example: 20.Qxb6 axb6 21.Ra1 Nc3 22.Bd3 Rd8

**18...Rhb8!**

I completely missed this move in my calculations. I spent too much time analysing the line 18...Qxa6 19.Qf4+ Ke7



20.Rc7+ Kd8 21.Qxf7 Qd6 It was clear that White should be fine here, but I could not calculate this position to "the end". Perhaps that was not necessary anyway! I planned to play 22.Rfc1! e5 (Black loses after 22...Bc4 23.Nd4! Qxc7 24.Nxe6+ Bxe6 25.Qxc7+ Ke8 26.Qe5) 23.Qxg7 (in case of 23.Nxe5?! Bxf7 24.Nxf7+ Ke8 25.Nxd6+ Nxd6 26.Rxg7 a5 Black should be OK.) 23...Re8 (I also looked at 23...Rg8 24.Qxe5 Qxe5 25.Nxe5±) 24.Ng5 for example: 24...Nxc5 25.Qxc5+ Re7 26.R1c5! Be6 27.h3!+-

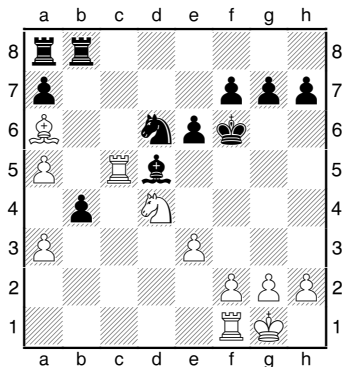
I also saw 18...Bc4 19.Qb7!+-

**19.Qa5 Qb6 20.Nd4 Nd6!**

Another strong move - the a6-bishop is more of a headache now than an asset. I only counted on 20...Qxa5 21.bxa5 b4 where White is still better after 22.f3! for example:

22...Nd2 23.Rf2 Nb3 24.Nxb3 Bxb3 25.axb4 Rxb4 26.Rb2

**21.Rc5 Qxa5 22.bxa5 b4 (D)**



**23.axb4**

I spent a good while considering 23.f3 bxa3 (apparently, I missed 23...Bb7!?) 24.e4 a2

A) and 25.Bd3 Rc8 (here I over-looked 25...Rb4!) 26.Rxc8 Rxc8 27.exd5 Rc3 my feeling was that in both lines White would be playing with fire, so I called it a day.

B) 25.exd5 25...Rb1 26.Nc2 Rab8

**23...Rxb4 24.Rfc1 ½-½**

Here is the game annotated by Alex Lopez of his win over Harmen Jonkman GM.

**Lopez,A (2287) - Jonkman,H (2426) [C54]**

**Cork Chess Congress (5), 01.04.2007**

*Annotations by FM Alex Lopez*

**1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5 4.0-0 Nf6 5.d3**

This whole line is pretty unambitious, but as I am not playing much these days, I didn't want to go into some of the sharper options available to white.

**5...d6 6.c3 Bb6 7.Bg5?! (D)**

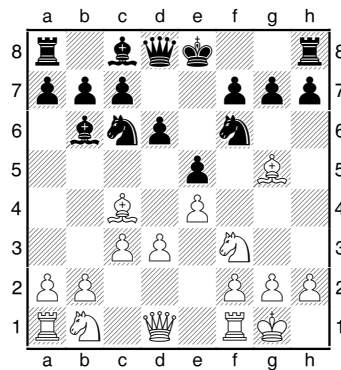
Too early, Jonkman's next few moves capitalise on this mistake, and White can only strive from equality out of the opening from here on in.

**7...h6 8.Bh4 g5!?**

Seizing the initiative...

**9.Bg3 Bg4 10.Nbd2 Nh5 11.Re1**

11.Kh1!? was the better option probably 11...Qd7 12.h3 Be6 (12...Bxh3? 13.gxh3 Qxh3+ 14.Nh2+- white has nothing to worry about here...) 13.Nh2 Nxc3+ 14.fxg3± an

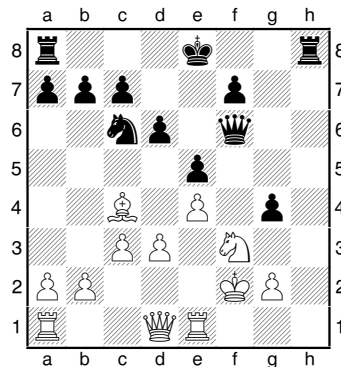


interesting position, I would debate whether or not white has any edge here, but I don't think he stands worse, which is better than the way the game continued... 14...0-0-0 15.Bxe6 fxe6

**11...Nxc3 12.hxc3 h5 13.Nf1 h4 14.Ne3 hxc3?!**

After this I think white's play is relatively straightforward 14...Bxe3! 15.Rxe3 hxc3 16.fxc3 Qf6 17.Qb3 0-0-0 18.Rf1 Be6 19.Bxe6+ fxe6 20.Nh2 Qg6 21.Ng4 d5± White will have a tough time in this position...

**15.Nxc4 gxf2+ 16.Nxf2 g4 17.Kf1 Bxf2 18.Kxf2 Qf6= (D)**



Up to here it's all pretty much forced, and 18...Qf6 is certainly the best move. Now white has a few options, and I think with accurate play on both sides, it's roughly equal.

**19.Re3 Rh7 20.Qe2 Nd4?**

Getting a little too creative, missing white's strong (and forced) 22nd move.

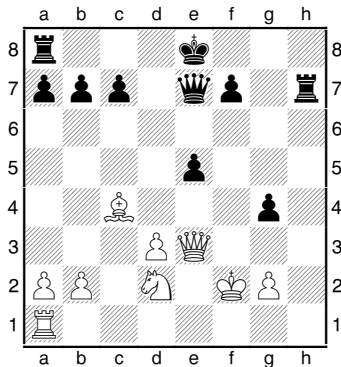
**21.cxd4 exd4 22.e5 dxe3+ 23.Qxe3 Qe7 24.Nd2?**

My opponent was already in some time trouble, and I guess I wanted to make sure time was a factor asap! Had I stopped to think a bit more though, Qe4 would have pretty much ended it! 24.Qe4! Rh8 25.Qxg4! the solid option, killing black's counterplay completely. (25.Qxb7 Rd8 26.exd6 Qxd6 27.Qe4+ Kf8 28.Ne5 Rh5 29.Re1 Qb6+ 30.Re3 Rd4 31.Nd7+ Rxd7 32.Qe8+ Kg7 33.Qxd7 g3+ 34.Kf3 Qf6+!= this is obviously not all forced, but as a line it's a good illustration of the dangers of taking the b7 pawn.) 25...d5 26.Bb3 c6 27.Re1+-

**24...dxe5 (D)**

Here I thought I had a winning position, but Fritz thinks it's tougher than what it looks, and he probably has a point! still, I think white's two minor pieces give him a definite

edge.



**25.Re1 f6 26.Ne4 b6 27.Bb5+ Kf8**

27...Kf7 28.Bc4+ Kg7 29.Ng3 Qb4 30.Re2 Rf8 31.Nf5+ Kh8 32.Kg3 and White has a definite advantage...

**28.Nc3 Rd8 29.Kg1 g3?!**

Unnecessary sacrifice

**30.Qxg3 Rd4 31.Bc4 Qg7 32.Qf3 Qh6**

32...Qh8 33.Rxe5! Rh1+ 34.Kf2 Qh4+ 35.Ke3 Rd8 36.Re6 Kg7 37.Kd2+-

**33.Ne4**

At this stage Jonkmann had only about 3 minutes left on the clock, so all I needed to make sure of was to not blunder in the next few moves. 33.Qa8+

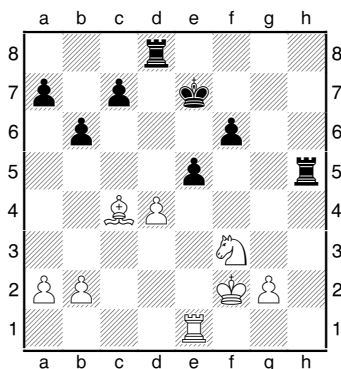
**33...Ke7 34.Qg4?!**

Another weak move, with a far better alternative 34.Ng3! Rf4 35.Nf5+ Rxf5 36.Qxf5+- may have been quicker... 36...Kd8 37.Qe4

**34...Qh1+ 35.Kf2 Qh4+ 36.Qxh4 Rxh4 37.Nd2 Rd8**

37...b5! 38.Bxb5 Rb4 39.Bc4 Rxb2 40.Kg3 Rh8 41.Ne4 a5 42.Rf1 Rh6 43.Rf2 and white will struggle to win this...

**38.Nf3 Rh5? 39.d4 (D)**



Once the central pawns fall, it's only a matter of technique. With about a minute on my opponent's clock at this point, my task was far simpler.

**39...c6 40.dxe5 fxe5 41.g4 Rhh8 42.Rxe5+ Kd6 43.Re6+ Kc5 44.Be2**

44.Ne5+-

**44...Rhe8 45.Rf6 Re4 46.g5**

46.Ng5 Ree8 47.Ne6+

**46...a5 47.g6 Rg4 48.Rxc6+ Kxc6 49.Ne5+ Kd6 50.Nxg4 Ke7**

and my opponents flag fell. still, its a simple enough win

from here anyway.

**1-0**

Ennis player Rory Quinn was best of the untitled players with a very impressive 5/6 in the final shakeup. His loss came in round 3 to GM Conquest but went onto finish third overall.

In a time scramble, Alex Lopez secure his final point of the tournament to finish joint first with GM Baburin with 5.5/6

<http://www.corkchess.com/Congress/2007/ResultsMasters.aspx>

In the majors section, numbers were down on last year owing a number of players deciding to play up. With that said 38 players got ready to do battle. Recent winner of the Bunratty tournament Gabriel Murza was top seed with 1580 rating, the bulk of players were inside the 1300-1500 rating band.

However, seeding and ratings are not a ticket to a win and it was young John Courtney (1325) who was making the early running with Yoel Ferrer(1400). A number of close followers were involved who eventually were part of the final shake up. Having taken a traveling bye, even this scribe was involved at one point with an opportunity for joint 2<sup>nd</sup> after round 5.

In round 5 John won the crucial encounter with Yoel Ferrer and drew his remaining game to take the title.

Alas, during the tournament, the dreaded mobile phone cost a player a game. This despite our best announcements, notice and reminders....!! It is relatively new for all concerned but its still unfortunate to have to let someone know that its game over.

There were a large gathering on joint 2<sup>nd</sup>, including Cork players Donal O' Hallahan, Alex Martinovic and Joe Moroney. I missed out with a spectacular horror show gaff in round 6, but top ten was not so bad for my first Cork majors....?!!

All results listed here.

<http://www.corkchess.com/Congress/2007/ResultsMajors.aspx>

In the minors section, there were 60 players of all ages and indeed a few internationals to add to the mix. Didier Mukekwa, Thabani Balang (ex-Cork, now Limerick...and playing while his expectant partner was 36 weeks gone..such commitment !!!! ) and Amin Shamsudin played impressively and were the front runners. Local performers Daniel Cashin and Mark O'Hallahan did very well also.

A lot of the young players appreciated the refreshments we laid on, we accept no responsibility for any hyper kids Saturday or Sunday evenings! In keeping with the easy going atmosphere created, we gave out some small prizes to a lot of the younger players as a memento of the occasion, supplied from Hungarian IM Erdélyi Tamás and tournament controller, John Alfred.

Alex Baburin also generously sponsored some vouchers for his book stall for some of the prizes.

There was no stopping Didier who ran out an excellent 6/6 finish with Thabani and Amin sharing joint second. Six players shared 4-9<sup>th</sup> place.

<http://www.corkchess.com/Congress/2007/ResultsMinors.aspx>

As a final treat for all young players. GM Alex Baburin held a Q&A session. I know from looking at the faces of some of the parents that they had probably primed their kids to ask questions they actually want to know. It was well received and definitely something to consider for a repeat performance next year. (Fresh questions please !!)

On behalf of Tom Hickey & myself, we hope those who played enjoyed the weekend and look forward to making it happen all again for 2008.

All the best,

Michael Bradley

Co-Tournament Director

April 2007

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## Letters to the Editor

### Defaults

Dear Sir,

In case I don't get to the A.G.M I'd like to make a formal complaint about the number of opponents of mine who haven't turned up for their games during the last 12 months. The offending players are all habitually bad time keepers and the games they defaulted against me are not the only ones they've been guilty of missing. May I suggest some remedies:

1. Any player who is known for defaulting should be made to pay a 50 euro bond upon entering a tournament, if he turns up on time for all his games he gets it back if not he forfeits.
2. A player who does not turn up should be deemed to have lost on time and rated accordingly because that is in fact what has happened, the player has failed to make the first time control of 1 move in 60 minutes.
3. A player should be suspended after 2 defaults in a season.
4. This business of allowing a player an hour's grace should be scrapped (it is not a fide rule), 30 minutes is ample time for

anybody. I used to play golf and you didn't get even 5 minutes grace yet it was never a problem.

This is not the first time that I have complained on this issue yet nothing is ever done.

Regards,  
Peter Caffola

### Irish Championships

Just a few comments on the Irish Championships. Firstly it was a great improvement on the 12 player competition we had last year, BUT, given that there was generous sponsorship, I thought that it could have been held in a better room with suitable lighting and space between boards, silent air conditioning or windows etc. Also, the cheap clocks used were the worst I've come across in over 30 years of competition.

My main gripe however is with the fact that the tournament was open to everyone, and this isn't motivated by the fact that I lost to a 1700 (I lost to an 1100 2 years ago) rated player. There are a number of reasons I believe that the tournament should be restricted to players over 1800 or 1900 rating.

- (1) There is little satisfaction in playing or beating a low rated player and the gulf is so great that the patzer doesn't even learn anything.
- (2) It devalues our national title to have players of little more than beginner standard in it
- (3) it is practically impossible for anyone to get a norm if they must play low rated players
- (4) We reached a situation where the joint champions didn't get to play each other, this wouldn't have happened in a smaller field
- (5) Stephen Brady is a worthy Irish champion and probably only second to the great J J O'Hanlon in terms of Irish title success but on this occasion he achieved the title by playing a lot of lower rated players (myself included) whereas Brian Kelly had to play all the G.Ms . Stephen himself pointed this out to me, showing that he is not only a great champion but a great sportsman too.

I was told that the sponsors insisted on the competition being open. If this is indeed the case then I think it can only be because no one pointed out the downsides. I thank Island Oil and Gas for their great sponsorship and hope that they and the ICU will put everything right for next year when we could have the best Irish Championships ever.

Regards,  
Peter Cafolla

## Bunratty Congress

*Kevin Burke*

Windy country roads, cold mornings, great pubs, chess boards – the end of February can only mean the annual congregation in Bunratty. The 14th incarnation was arguably the strongest ever as, although numbers were down to a mere 262, the Masters section boasted a record 48 entries, up 33% on last year. 4GMs, 8IMs, an FM, a WIM, a WFM, the cream of the Irish chess scene and numerous overseas players were all vying for the €1,000 top prize and, of course, the crystal trophy.

We had interesting results from the off – Éamon Keogh defeating Yuri Rochev. Rochev recovered to almost pull off a perfect Swiss Submarine set of results, winning his next four games before losing to Nicholas Pert GM to cost him a tie of the title.

The three way tie for first place doesn't indicate the tightness of the competition – going into the last round, Rochev was one of six players in the lead on 4/5, and they were all drawn against each other in the decider. John Fedorowicz GM lost to Joel Benjamin GM and surprise package Antoon van Lanen – who had beaten reigning champion Simon Williams IM and drawn with Pert – lost to Gawain Jones IM. Amidst this carnage, Alexander Baburin GM came up on the rails to claim sole ownership of fourth place with a final round win over Mark Orr IM.

The title was decided on a blitz tie break – Pert lost out on a tie break, and Jones and Benjamin fought it out on the big screen; Benjamin had the advantage of the white pieces and used it to the full, beating Jones to take the trophy (the cash, as usual, was split between the three players).

Elsewhere, there were others not in the hunt for money, but still having an excellent tournament. One such player was Liam Normoyle – seeded 47 of the 48, the 1849-rated Normoyle turned in a 2250 performance, finishing on 3½/6, the same score as Éaom Keogh, while 46th seed Jan Mueller ended on 3/6.

Down to the Challengers so, which was won by Paul Kiely, the only player to have played in every Bunratty tournament to date. Dropping only a half point to top seed Sam Osborne, he was a worthy winner and sealed victory with a last round win over Tom Fitzpatrick. Fitzpatrick, who was only four points over the bottom rating band, turned in one of the best performances in the competition to take a share of third on 4½/6, as did Vincent Bissett, eight points higher rated but who finished on the same score.

The Major competition was won, again on 5½/6, by a rather interesting character – Gabriel Mirza, who now lives in Limerick, formerly played football for Romanian side Otelul Galati, and was involved when they beat Juventus 1-0 in the First Round of the 1989/90 UEFA Cup. They did go on to lose the second leg 5-0 in the Stadio Delle Alpi, but it's not an experience most of the rest of us chess

players can match! Youl Ferrer, winner of the Leinster Championships two months previously, continued his good form to take third – he was on 4/4 before losing a crunch tie against Mirza.

The largest section, as usual, was the Minor section, although it was smaller than previous years. It's a notoriously difficult section to predict, as unrated players can come from nowhere to make a challenge. It ended in a tie between Darlington Mabuzwe and Stephen Cunningham. The latter's only dropped half point came in an agreed quick draw on Saturday evening – a rather precocious touch from a 12-year old! – while Mabuzwe went into the last round on 5/5, knowing a win over John McKenna would ensure overall success, but he had to settle for a draw and a big screen blitz play-off. Completely unfazed, Cunningham blitzed (if you'll pardon the pun!) the decider and afterwards admitted that he knew he was winning because of the cheers coming from the next room. As he collected his trophy, he dropped it – fortunately, it remained intact, although it led Gerry Graham to quip "Of all the times to drop a piece".

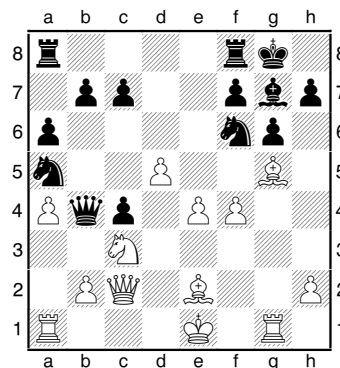
The prizegiving ceremony also saw Alexander Baburin presented with a special trophy by the ICU for his work in Irish chess.

One other major event during the weekend was the delay of Round 4, much to the bemusement of the foreign contingent, who couldn't understand the fascination of the egg-chasing which was relayed live on the big screen in the bar area. But they were never going to persuade the organisers of a tournament just a few miles from the rugby heartland of Limerick to turn off Ireland's historic thrashing of England in Croke Park just so they could play a chess game! It would never happen at any other tournament, some noted.

But then, there isn't really another tournament like Bunratty.

### De Jonge,H - Baburin GM,A [D21] Bunratty Masters (1), 23.02.2007

1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.Nf3 a6 4.a4 Nf6 5.Nc3 Nc6 6.e4 Bg4 7.Be3 Bxf3 8.gxf3 e5 9.d5 Na5 10.Rg1 g6 11.f4 exf4 12.Bxf4 Bg7 13.Be2 0-0 14.Bg5 Qd6 15.f4 Qb4 16.Qc2



16...Nxe4 17.Qxe4 Qxb2 18.Kf2 Rfe8 19.Be7 Qxc3 20.Rad1 Nb3 21.Rg3 Nd2 22.Rxd2 Qxd2 23.f5 Qd4+ 0-1

**Keogh,E - Rochev,Y [B23]**

**Bunratty Masters (1), 23.02.2007**

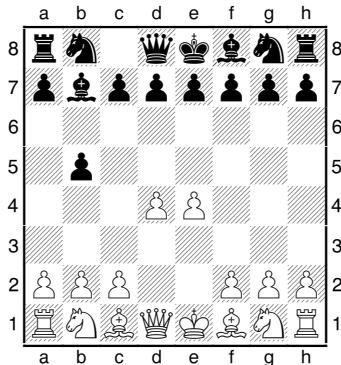
1.e4 c5 2.Nc3 e6 3.g3 d5 4.Bg2 Nf6 5.d3 dxe4 6.Nxe4 Nxe4 7.Bxe4 Nd7 8.Ne2 Nf6 9.Bg2 Be7 10.0-0 0-0 11.Nc3 Qb6 12.Qe2 Bd7 13.b3 Bc6 14.Bxc6 Qxc6 15.Bb2 Rfd8 16.Rae1 b5 17.Ne4 Nxe4 18.Qxe4 Rac8 19.Qg4 Bf8 20.h4 c4 21.dxc4 bxc4 22.h5 h6 23.Bc1 Kh8 24.Be3 Qa6 25.Qf3 Kg8 26.g4 Rd5 27.a4 cxb3 28.cxb3 Qd3 29.Rc1 Rcd8 30.Rc7 f5 31.gxf5 Rxf5 32.Qg4 Rf6 33.Rfc1 Qxb3 34.Bd4 Rxd4 35.Qxd4 Qh3 36.R1c3 Qxh5 37.Rg3 Rg6 38.Rcc3 Rxc3+ 39.Rxc3 a5 40.Qe4 Qf5 41.Qa8 Kh7 42.Rf3 Qb1+ 43.Kg2 Bd6 44.Qxa5 Qe4 45.Qc3 Qg4+ 46.Kf1 Bb4 47.Qd3+ Kg8 48.Rg3 Qh4 49.Qg6 Qc4+ 50.Kg1 Bc3 51.Qc2 1-0

**Baburin GM,A - Wuts FM,F [A40]**

**Bunratty Masters (2), 24.02.2007**

[Alexander Baburin ([www.chesstoday.net](http://www.chesstoday.net))]

**1.d4 b5 2.e4 Bb7 (D)**



**3.Bxb5**

I was surprised to find after the game that this logical move is not as popular as 3.f3 or 3.Bd3. Of course, central pawns are important, but so is the lead in development which White is about to acquire. 3.f3 a6 4.Be3 e6 5.Nd2 Nf6 6.c3 Be7 7.Bd3 d6 8.a4 c6 9.Ne2 Nbd7 10.0-0 0-0 11.Ng3 Re8 12.axb5 axb5 13.Rxa8 Qxa8 14.Qc2 Bf8 15.b4!± Petrosian-Spassky, Moscow 1966.

**3...Bxe4 4.Nf3 e6**

4...Nf6 5.0-0 e6 6.c4 Be7 7.Nc3 Bb7 8.Ba4 Ba6 9.Ne5 0-0 10.Qf3 c6 11.Rd1 Bb7 12.Bg5 d5 13.Bc2 Nfd7 14.Qh5 f5 15.Bxe7 Qxe7 16.Re1 Nxe5 17.Rxe5 Nd7 18.Re3 g6 19.Qe2 P.Littlewood-Klaric, Borovo 1980.

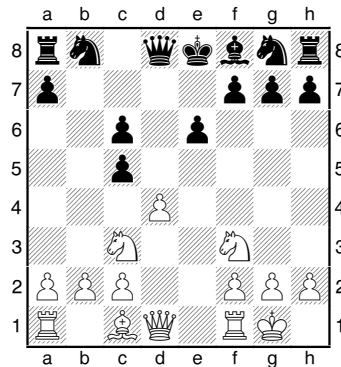
**5.0-0 c5?**

This is almost suicidal - lagging behind in development, Black creates pawn tension in the centre. 6.Nc3 Bc6 The only move. The position after 6...Bb7 7.d5 does not look pretty for Black.

**7.Bxc6**

Of course, I looked at 7.d5 exd5 but was not sure how to make it work. It seems that after 8.Bf4! d4 9.Bxc6 dxc6

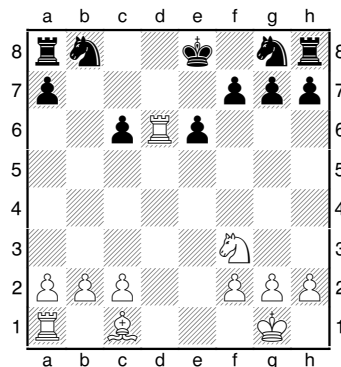
10.Ne4 White has fantastic compensation for a pawn. **7...dxc6 (D)**



Here I spent a while trying to find the best move. White's position looks overwhelming, but he has no pawn breaks in the centre. In such situations the best policy is to engage the opponent in immediate action and try to get some permanent advantage instead of the temporary (lead in development) one. Black would be even worse off after 7...Nxc6? 8.d5

**8.dxc5! Nd7?**

I thought that Black had to play 8...Qxd1 9.Rxd1 Bxc5 10.Ne4 Be7 11.Nd6+ Bxd6 12.Rxd6 (D)



Here the dark squares in the black's camp are chronically weak, which is a permanent disadvantage.

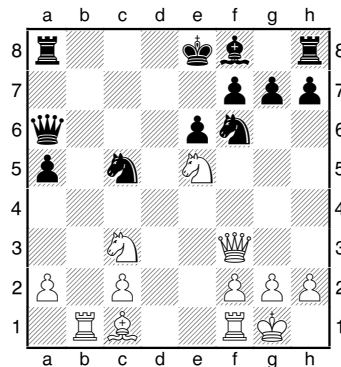
**9.b4! a5 10.b5 Nxc5 11.bxc6 Qb6 12.Rb1**

Also good was 12.Ne5

**12...Qxc6 13.Ne5 Qa6**

More resilient was 13...Qc8

**14.Qf3 Nf6 (D)**



**15.Rb6! Qa7**

15...Qc8 16.Rc6 Qb7 17.Be3+-

**16.Qc6+**

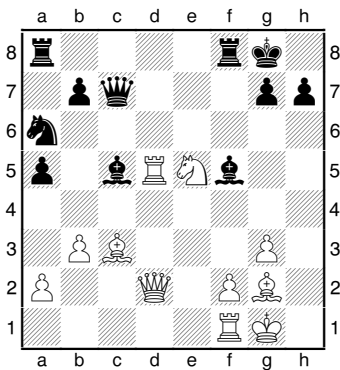
16.Qc6+ Nfd7 17.Nxd7 Nxd7 18.Rb7

**1-0**

**Benjamin GM,J - Williams IM,S [A96]**

**Bunratty Masters (3), 24.02.2007**

1.d4 e6 2.Nf3 f5 3.g3 Nf6 4.Bg2 Be7 5.0-0 0-0 6.c4 d6  
7.Nc3 a5 8.b3 Ne4 9.Bb2 Nxc3 10.Bxc3 Qe8 11.Re1 c6  
12.e4 f4 13.d5 cxd5 14.e5 dx5 15.cxd5 fxg3 16.hxg3 Qf7  
17.Qd2 Bc5 18.Rxe5 exd5 19.Rxd5 Na6 20.Rf1 Bf5  
21.Ne5 Qc7 (D)

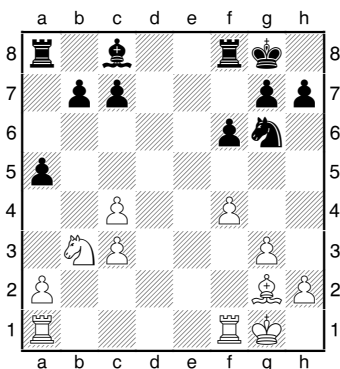


22.Nd7 Rfd8 23.Be5 Qxd7 24.Rxd7 Rxd7 25.Qxa5 Bd3  
26.Rd1 Bb4 27.Qb6 Re8 28.Bh3 Rde7 29.Rxd3 Bc5  
30.Qb5 Rxe5 31.Qc4+ Kh8 32.Rd5 Re1+ 33.Kg2 Ba7  
34.Bd7 Rd8 35.Bg4 Rf8 36.Rf5 Rfe8 37.Qf7 g6 38.Qf6+  
Kg8 39.Bf3 Nc7 40.Rf4 R1e7 41.b4 Bb8 42.Bd1 Ne6  
43.Rf3 Bd6 44.Bb3 Bxb4 45.Re3 1-0

**Fedorowicz GM,J - Benjamin GM,J [A09]**

**Bunratty Masters (6), 25.02.2007**

1.Nf3 d5 2.c4 d4 3.g3 Nc6 4.Bg2 e5 5.0-0 Nf6 6.d3 Nd7  
7.e3 Bc5 8.exd4 Nxd4 9.Nbd2 0-0 10.Nxd4 Bxd4 11.Nf3  
Bc5 12.Bd2 a5 13.Bc3 f6 14.d4 exd4 15.Nxd4 Ne5  
16.Nb3 Bb4 17.Qe1 Bxc3 18.Qxc3 Qd3 19.f4 Qxc3  
20.bxc3 Ng6 (D)



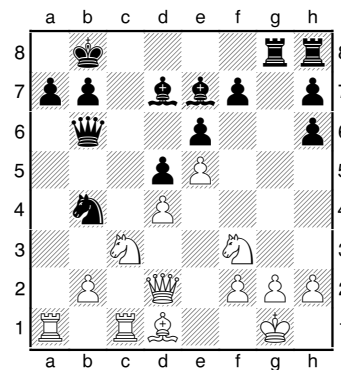
21.Nd4 Rd8 22.Rab1 c6 23.Rfe1 Kf7 24.Rb2 a4 25.h4 a3  
26.Rb3 Ra4 27.Bf1 Ne7 28.Kf2 c5 29.Nc2 Nf5 30.Ne3  
Nxe3 31.Rxe3 Rd2+ 32.Re2 Rd6 33.Re3 b6 34.Rd3 Rxd3

35.Bxd3 Ra6 36.Rb1 h6 37.Ke3 f5 38.h5 Be6 39.Kd2 Kf6  
40.Kc2 Bf7 41.Be2 Be6 42.Rd1 Ke7 43.Re1 Kf6 44.Bf1  
Bf7 45.Rb1 Ke7 46.Kd2 Kd6 47.Be2 Be6 48.Kc2 Kc7  
49.Bd3 Ra7 50.Re1 Kd6 51.Re5 Ra8 52.Kc1 Ra4 53.Bxf5  
Bxf5 54.Rxf5 Rxc4 55.Kc2 Re4 56.Kb3 Re3 57.g4 b5  
58.Kxa3 Rxc3+ ... 0-1 time

**Normoyle,L - Redmond,J [C03]**

**Bunratty Masters (6), 25.02.2007**

**1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nd2 Be7 4.e5 c5 5.c3 Nc6 6.Ndf3 Bd7  
7.Ne2 Qc7 8.Be3 Nh6 9.Ng3 cxd4 10.cxd4 Nb4 11.Rc1  
Qa5 12.Qd2 Qxa2 13.Bxh6 gxh6 14.Be2 Nc6 15.0-0 0-0  
16.Ra1 Qb3 17.Rfc1 Kb8 18.Bd1 Qb6 19.Ne2 Nb4  
20.Nc3 Rdg8 (D)**



**21.h4 Rg6 22.Ba4 Bxa4 23.Nxa4 Qb5 24.Qc3 Nc6 25.g3  
Rhg8 26.Kh2 Rg4 27.Qd2 Qb4 28.Qc2 h5 29.Ra3 Rc8  
30.Rc3 Qb5 31.Nc5 Bxc5 32.Rxc5 Qb4 33.Qxh7 Qxb2  
34.R1c2 Qa3 35.Kg2 Qd3??**

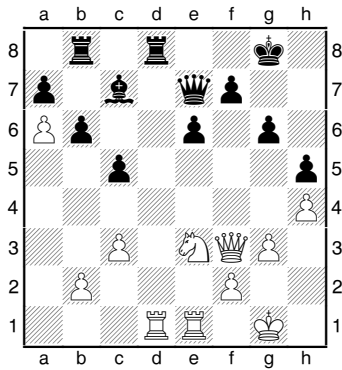
A time trouble mistake in a much inferior position anyway  
36.Qxd3 1-0

<http://members.aol.com/bunrattychess/>

## Test Your Tactics

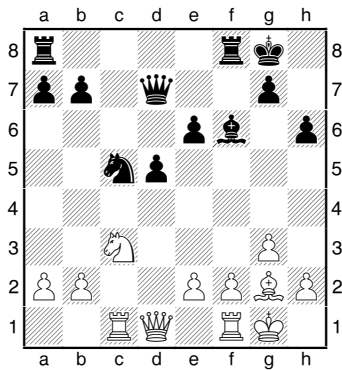
Puzzles from the Irish Championships.

A)



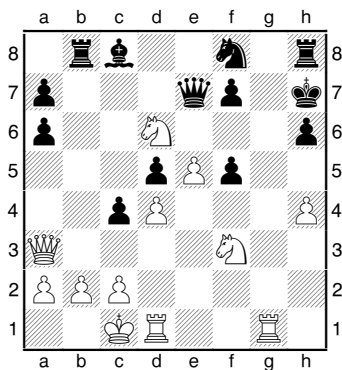
**Egan,C - Normoyle,L**  
**IRL-ch Dublin (2), 01.07.2007**  
 White to play

B)



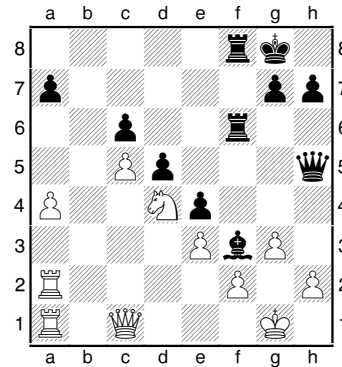
**McCarthy,G - Khonji,H**  
**IRL-ch Dublin (3), 02.07.2007**  
 White to play

C)



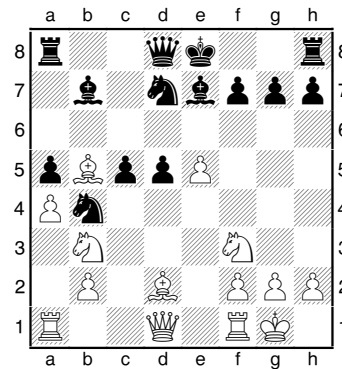
**Hogarty,P - Lynch,P**  
**IRL-ch Dublin (4), 03.07.2007**  
 White to play

D)



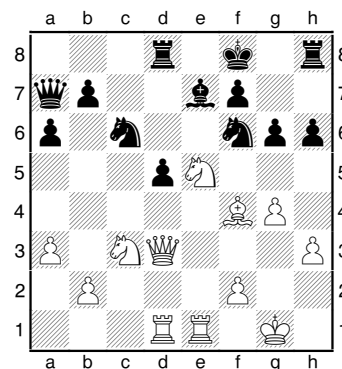
**Egan,C - McCarthy,G**  
**IRL-ch Dublin (4), 03.07.2007**  
 Black to play and win

E)



**Brady,S - Redmond,J**  
**IRL-ch Dublin (8), 07.07.2007**  
 White to play

F)



**O'Connell,G - Jeffares,S**  
**IRL-ch Dublin (9), 08.07.2007**  
 White to play

**Solutions at the end of the next article!!**

## Leagues Roundup

### Marek Goban retains the Galway Winter League

Ronan Duke

The Galway Winter League 2006/07 started on November 16, 2006 and was played over 7 rounds with Marek Goban as defending champion.

24 players entered in this, the 5th running of the main ICU-rated competition in Connaught during the winter months. Defending champion Marek Goban had a fairly trouble-free journey towards retaining his title, only conceding one draw, to Mike O'Donnell in the final round. Zaidan Zulkipli was clear runner-up, a full point ahead of a group of 4 players on 4.5/7. Third prize went to Paul Ward by the tightest of tie-break margins from Mike O'Donnell. The grading prize went to Amin Shamsudin, also on 4.5/7.

The Galway Chess Club would like to thank John McKenna (from the Ballinasloe Club) for doing most of the organizing for this competition. We would also like to thank all those who came from Ballinasloe and Westport every 3 weeks to play in the tournament and gave much needed life to the competition.

### Munster

Jim Olney

DOUGLAS have regained the Munster League Division One trophy they last won in 1997 and in so doing deprived runners-up Ennis of a fourth title in a row. Cork 'A' finished third, while Limerick were relegated after a tough battle with CCYMS.

Final scores: 1, Douglas 44/60; 2, Ennis 37.5; 3, Cork 'A' 32.5; 4, Cork 'B' 28; 5, Sarsfield 28; 6, CCYMS 20.5; 7, Limerick 19.5.

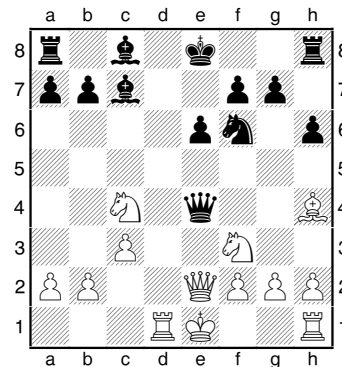
Douglas brought off a fine coup by acquiring the services of English import Simon Williams. The 27-year-old international master has attained five grandmaster norms and his rating is fast closing in on the requisite 2500 he needs for the GM title, having made IM at the age of 15 over a decade ago. Williams scored 7.5/8 on top board, while FM Alex Lopez, alternating between boards one and two, achieved a perfect 11/11, missing just the last match with the title already secured.

In his two battles with the Ennis club's grandmaster top board, Williams scored 1.5/2.

**Williams,S - Jones,G [B22]  
Munster League Division 1, 2007**

**1.e4 c5 2.d4 cxd4 3.c3 Nf6 4.e5 Nd5 5.Bc4 e6 6.Qxd4**

**Nc6 7.Qe4 d6 8.exd6 Nf6 9.Qe2 Bxd6 10.Bg5 h6 11.Bh4 Ne5 12.Nd2 Nxc4 13.Nxc4 Bc7 14.Nf3 Qd5 15.Rd1 Qe4?? (D)**



**16.Rd8+! Ke7**

16...Kxd8 17.Bxf6+ gxf6 18.Qxe4

16...Bxd8 17.Nd6+

**17.Bxf6+ gxf6 18.Qxe4 Rxd8 19.0-0 Rb8 20.Nd4 1-0**

The Douglas panel in rating order comprised IM Simon Williams, IM Chris Baker, FM Alex Lopez, Mel O'Conneide, Kieran O'Driscoll, Colin Harper, Kevin O'Shea, Tom Healy, Dave Smith and Paddy McCarthy.

Ennis 'B' captured the Division Two title with 33.5 points from Milford 27.5, Club 64 26.5, Kerry 23.5, Dungarvan 'A' 20 and Charleville 14. Ennis 'B' are promoted while Charleville are relegated to Division Three.

In Division Three, Limerick 'B' won from Dungarvan 'B' and Cork 'D' and are promoted to Division Two.

### Leinster

Kevin Burke

The Leinster leagues concluded at the end of March with their usual high drama, with Rathmines A sealing the Armstrong title after holding off a fierce late charge from Kilkenny in Inchicore.

They went into the final day a point ahead of Gonzaga, and level with Kilkenny, who had recorded an 8-0 win over Drogheda in Round 10 to come right back into contention after a slow start. Gonzaga, however, could only manage a 4-4 draw against Trinity on the final day, which left just Kilkenny and Rathmines in title contention. Despite Alexander Baburin winning what all around assumed was a lost end-game – Queen, Bishop, Rook and four pawns against Queen, two Rooks and four pawns – Kilkenny's 6-2 win against Dublin just wasn't enough to sneak a second successive Armstrong as Rathmines beat Dún Laoghaire 6½-1½ to win the league by the narrowest of margins. An 8-0 win for Phibsboro on the last day – also against Drogheda – saw them sneak a tie for third.

It was a rather ignominious season for the Louth club, who recorded just 5 points from their last six games (one a walkover), including all the clubs who ended the season in the top five places. They will be hoping to regroup in the



Heidenfeld next year, as will Bray/Greystones, relegated after a season in which they called on 20 players.

Their places in the Armstrong will be taken by Rathmines [*they have since declined their place as they have two Armstrong teams already - ed.*] and Phibsboro, which means the two Dublin clubs will have almost half the league teams between them – two Phibsboro teams and a remarkable three Rathmines teams. It has happened before with Elm Mount, but it will put a lot of strain on the club who will be looking to their fourth team – relegated to the Ennis – for subs, as you can't sub for a team in the same division, or sub up to two different teams in the same division. With their first team presumably going to be calling the shots in their attempt to retain their league title, it looks like a long season ahead for Rathmines C next year.

For their part, Phibsboro only sealed promotion on a tie-break from Elm Mount, whom they beat 4½-3½ at the start of the season. They nearly threw away promotion on the last day when they lost 5-3 to Celbridge, but Elm Mount just couldn't take advantage, winning 4½-2½ (one default) against Lucan. Kilkenny – who would have forced a three-way tie with a 6-2 win over Curragh on the last day – look to be a good bet for next season's title, with a squad which includes the likes of Aravind Menon, Poormina Menon WFM and Shane Manning, along with, presumably, the newest young stars being brought through on the Kilkenny conveyor belt.

Another tight finish in the Ennis, where a single point separated Elm Mount A, Inchicore and Phibsboro in the end. A last-day shoot out between Elm Mount A and Inchicore saw the former win out in the latter's home venue – a 3½-2½ win securing the title. With the top two playing each other, there was always the possibility of third placed Phibsboro sneaking promotion on the rails, but they could only manage a 4-2 win against relegated Finglas. At one stage, it appeared as if a whitewash was on the cards, but Finglas fought back, albeit in vain from their point of view. Benildus and Aer Lingus also had an outside shout of promotion on the final day – Benildus beating Aer Lingus winning 3½-2½ despite conceding one board due to a miscalculation on one player's part in the changing of the clocks! It's the second year in a row Benildus have missed out on promotion on the final day, and with a couple of players to come back next season, they could well be the side to beat in next year's Ennis. Indeed, the Killane Shield game between Benildus and Inchicore could well be one of the ties of the tournament. Aer Lingus, meanwhile, concluded a remarkable season in which John Quigley drew his first nine games before winning one and losing one, while Jim Kenny drew nine and lost one of his ten games! At the bottom, Gonzaga's total of 22 players was the highest used by any of the 66 league teams over the season.

To the O'Hanlon league next, and Kilkenny's ever-growing influence on Leinster chess was felt here too, with a 5-1

win over Drogheda – who must really hate the Cats at this stage – putting the gloss on a 7½ point victory in the league, the second highest league winning margin this season. Two 3½-2½ wins against Phibsboro and Balbriggan were as bad as it got, with Anthony Baker, John Courtney and Michael Tierney all taking board prizes, with Robert White and Frank Harte just a half point off. Longford join them in getting promoted – an amazing third straight promotion for the club since joining the Bodley in 2004/05.

With only eleven teams in the division, there was only one relegation spot to avoid, and it went to an over-stretched Elm Mount side, who were also relegated from the BAs in rather emphatic fashion, with 2½ points in total and conceding 13 walkovers. Promotion was a clear three horse race, with Royal Lopez, Portmarnock and Classic Kings ten points ahead of the chasing pack. This one also went down to the final day, where Royal Lopez – average rating 1563 – beat Bray/Greystones – average rating 904 plus two ungraded players – 5-0, while Portmarnock beat Celbridge 4½ – (-½) (not a typo!), all of which rendered Classic Kings' 3-2 final-day win over Jobstown irrelevant. With four 1500+ players, though, the Dunshaughlin team should be able to seal promotion next season. Board prizes went to 913-rated Eóin O'Dwyer from Portmarnock with 9½/11, Royal Lopez's John Farren, who scored 9/9, and Senan Bannon and Éamon Launders of Classic Kings, both with 8½.

The Bodley was a more informal affair, with no last-day meeting. Naomh Barrog continue to crush all in their path and sealed promotion with a 9½ point margin, dropping just 1½ points in their opening four games, and only two more overall! Phibsboro looked like favourites to join them in the BA, and Portmarnock were in contention too, but heavy defeats to Naomh Barrog let Rathmines slip past them, earning promotion by a half point margin.

#### **More information:**

The current Leinster league tables are available from both of the following sites:

<http://www.chessleague.net/> (Peter Scott)

<http://www.leinsterchess.com> (LCU official site)

More information on the Galway Winter League can be found on Galway Chess Club's homepage: [www.galwaychess.net](http://www.galwaychess.net)

#### **Solutions to the tactical puzzles**

**A) 27.Nd5! Rxd5 (27...Qd6 28.Nf6+) 28.Rxd5**

**B) 15.Nxd5 Be7 16.Rxc5 1-0**

**C) 20.Nxf5! 1-0**

**D) 28...Qxh2+! 0-1**

**E) 16.e6!! fxe6 17.Nc5 Qc7 18.Bxd7+ Kd8 19.Bf4 Bd6 20.Nf7+ Kxd7 21.Bxd6 1-0**

**F) 22.Nxg6+!! fvg6 23.Qxg6 Ng8 24.Nxd5 Qc5 25.Nc7 Nd4 26.Rxd4 1-0**

## Leinster League Strength or, How Good is Your Board?

Kevin Burke

The 2006/07 Leinster league seasons were rather unusual for me – due to a quirk whereby we had a bye in the last round of the O’Hanlon, I ended up getting a full season in Division Four before subbing up to our threadbare Division Three side a lot earlier than I’d otherwise have been able to. In all, I played ten games for the O’Hanlon (scoring 7/10 on board 1) and five for the Ennis (scoring 4½/5 around boards 4 to 6). A decent performance, then, and one which helped my rating jump over 70 points – possibly enough to jump up a place in the club rankings and claim a spot on the Ennis for this year.

However, my form (and the strength of my opponents) on both teams made me think about whether I’d actually be better off staying on the O’Hanlon to play Board 1 again. There’s often some strong players on Board 1 in any division, particularly small regional clubs who have one or two very strong players but don’t have the strength in depth overall to reach the higher leagues. On the bottom board, meanwhile, you’re more likely to encounter subs from the lower teams, which defeats the whole point of moving up a division.

Yes, I reckoned – Board 1 in the O’Hanlon is surely better than Board 6 in the Ennis. But is it? And if so, is it better than Board 5? Just how do the boards overall compare?

A simple test was called for. Using the excellent [www.ChessLeague.net](http://www.ChessLeague.net), I was able to calculate the average strength of each board in each division in Leinster and make a very quick comparison. I only bothered doing this for the first series of matches – there isn’t likely to be a significant difference over the season as, by and large, the same players play on the same boards. Unrated players were ignored for the test, which leads to a bit of disorientation down around the Bodley, but other than that is again insignificant.

Much to my smug satisfaction, I was proved right – Board 1 in the O’Hanlon was on average a remarkable 172 points stronger than Board 6 in the Ennis. But then I started making some rather curious discoveries, which I wouldn’t have guessed at. Board 1 in the O’Hanlon is actually stronger than both Board 3 in the Ennis (by a whole four points) and Board 8 in the Heidenfeld. In fact, so weak is Board 6 in the Ennis that Board 1 in the BA outranks it, although bizarrely, Ennis Board 6 did outrank Ennis Board 5 – the only case of inversion I found within a division outside of the distorted Bodley ratings.

The top seven boards were, not surprisingly, the top seven Armstrong boards – everyone still wants to play at the very top. The gap between boards is the greatest at the top – the three biggest gaps are those between Armstrong Boards 2,

3, 4 and 5 (74, 74 and 80 points respectively). Armstrong Board 8 comes in after the first four Heidenfeld teams though, and is immediately followed by Board 1 in the Ennis. There’s only an 80 point gap between Board 1 in the BA and Board 8 in the Heidenfeld, and even Board 1 in the Bodley was stronger than Board 5 in the O’Hanlon!

So think carefully about stepping up a team. It’s certainly good for the CV, but don’t go expecting it to provide a tougher challenge!

League	Board	Average
1	Armstrong	2115
2	Armstrong	2050
3	Armstrong	1976
4	Armstrong	1902
5	Armstrong	1822
6	Armstrong	1766
7	Armstrong	1740
8	Heidenfeld	1729
9	Heidenfeld	1670
10	Heidenfeld	1604
11	Heidenfeld	1590
12	Armstrong	1586
13	Ennis	1556
14	Heidenfeld	1542
15	Heidenfeld	1489
16	Ennis	1470
17	Heidenfeld	1458
18	O’Hanlon	1419
19	Ennis	1415
20	Heidenfeld	1387
21	Ennis	1356
22	O’Hanlon	1334
23	BA	1308
24	O’Hanlon	1281
25	Ennis	1246
26	Ennis	1237
27	BA	1227
28	BA	1208
29	O’Hanlon	1186
30	Bodley	1182
31	O’Hanlon	1110
32	O’Hanlon	1083
33	BA	1017
34	Bodley	949
35	BA	910
35	Bodley	910
37	Bodley	886
38	Bodley	864

Table: How the various boards measure up. Data compiled from the LCU chess league site.

## Ennis Open

*Rory Quinn*

The inaugural Ennis Open was held at the Auburn Lodge Hotel over the weekend of the 13th-15th April. 59 competitors played over two sections, an open (including the North Munster Championship) and an U1400 with a number of players rated under 1400 opting to play in the Open. The organizers had hoped for a slightly larger turnout but a plethora of recent tournaments combined with the good weather meant that numbers were a bit lower than expected. Nevertheless those who did turn up were rewarded with some fireworks both on and off the board.

Top seed in the Open section was the chess coach at Millfield School and former Channel 4 Countdown champion GM Matthew Turner, a full 200 points higher rated than second seed Karl McPhillips. Last year's North Munster champion, Gawain Jones, was not in attendance, having bigger fish to fry at the European Championships in Dresden. In any case Gawain would have been ineligible to win the North Munster as he is now resident in Enniskillen.

In the end Matthew fully justified his seeding with a comfortable win on 5½ points. The only blot on his copybook was a draw with Rory Quinn in round 5 when on the black side of an Accelerated Dragon he seemed to stand better but, just as the clock started to become a factor, allowed a tactic which transposed into an opposite coloured bishop ending. In the previous round Matthew playing the white side of his favoured English opening dispatched Karl McPhillips and he has kindly annotated the game. In the last round Matthew beat Paul Kiely after breaking through on the queenside in an English. This meant that Rory Quinn needed to beat Karl McPhillips on board two to catch him. After a complicated game in which the advantage swung back and forth a number of times the players entered a time scramble when, with both flags hanging, Karl blundered a piece only for Rory to miss the best continuation and a drawn position with knight and g pawn against f and far advanced a pawn was reached. This left Matthew in clear first, Rory finished second and won the North Munster title though he was helped somewhat by the vagaries of the Swiss system, receiving consecutive whites in the last two rounds. Karl finished in third place.

The U1800 section was won by Nick Larter from Ennis who also won a trophy donated by Marcel Castricum's parents, Henk and Elly. The U1500 grading prize was shared between promising Cork junior Hugh Doyle (who followed up with a win at the Irish U12 championships the following weekend) and Yoel Ferrer who benefited from Stefan Tomczak's forfeit of both his Sunday games. Stefan (who maybe has watched "The Prestige" one too many times!?) did his very own disappearing act from a crowded Brandons nightclub in the early hours of Sunday morning and subsequently forfeited both games later that day.

The U1400 turned out to be an eventful tournament with a

mobile phone related incident and some controversy before the start of the 4th round with two participants disagreeing on the result of their round 3 game, one claiming that the result was a draw and the other that his opponent had resigned. The language barrier was something of an issue here but everything was eventually resolved amicably although it did delay the start of round 4 somewhat.

Darlington Mabazwe from Zimbabwe but now living in Ennis followed up his success at Bunratty by sharing first place in the U1400 with Lucas Almeida. Darlington's last round draw with Anne Coughlan allowed Lucas to catch him with a win over Pat Coleman but Darlington won the Marcel Castricum shield on tiebreak. Third place was shared between Anne Coughlan of Cork and John Bourke of Castlebar. This may have softened the blow a bit for John, one of whose tips for the Grand National the previous day had fallen early. U1000 grading prizes went to Lathish Nair and Kevin Fitzpatrick. The U800 section was won by fast improving junior Billy McKenna on 4 points. Geronimo Alcantara from Letterkenny also won a prize in this section. Junior prizes for best Ennis, Killimer and Ballinasloe player were won by Karl Fitzmaurice, Jack McKenna, and Claire Bannon respectively. The prize for best girl in the U1400 section was won by Aoife Keane.

Finally special mention must go to the player in the U1400 who learned on Sunday that he had become a father for the first time. Undaunted he stayed to finish both his games. He lost both, later admitting his mind wasn't really on the games and that he found it difficult to concentrate. Now that's what I call dedication to the game!

Thanks to our sponsors the Auburn Lodge Hotel, Shannonside Building Supplies and Power One. Without their assistance the event could not have gone ahead.

**Turner, Matthew - McPhillips, Karl**  
**Ennis Open, Ennis, R4, 15 Apr 2007**

*Notes by GM Matthew Turner*

### 1.c4 Nc6 2.g3

Karl seems to always play Nc6 on move 1 and I had considered playing a Chigorin, which seems to give White a safe advantage, but I decided to stick to the old reliable English

### 2...e5 3.Bg2 g6 4.Nc3 Bg7 5.e3 d6 6.Nge2 h5

An attempt to mix it up. I don't want to respond with h4 because I will probably want to play f4 later and this will leave g4 horribly weak. I could just ignore 6...h5 and play 7. d4 h4 8. d5 N(c)e7 9. e4 when we have some strange King's Indian set up where I suspect white is doing quite well. However, I tried to keep flexibility with 7. h3

### 7.h3 Nh6 8.d3 0-0 9.Rb1 Be6 10.b4 Qd7 11.b5 Nd8 12.Bd2

I like this move because it maintains my options. It means for example that if later I play f4 and Black captures I can take back with the Knight. I am not sure what Black should do now although it might be worth playing a6 to hold of any serious decisions for some time. An unusual idea is f6

so that later the knights can use both f5 and f7

**12...f5 13.f4 e4 14.Qc2 c6**

I had expected 14...exd3 15. Qxd3 Qf7 when 16. Nd5 c6 is horrible for White and 16 Bd5 looks a little suspicious. However 16. Rb4 seems to maintain the advantage.

**15.0-0 d5 16.bxc6 bxc6 17.Na4 Nb7**

I was happy to see this move because the Knight looks very vulnerable. 17...exd3 (I thought the critical line was 17...dxc4 18. dxe4 Qd3 19. Nd4! Bxd4 20. Qxd3 cxd3 21. exd4 fxe4 which is as they say unclear!) 18. Qxd3 dxc4 19. Qxd7 Bxd7 20. Bc3 looks good for White

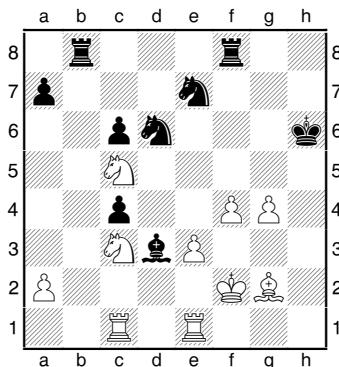
**18.Bc3 dxc4 19.dxe4 fxe4 20.Qxe4**

I think Karl must have missed that after Bf5 I can just take c4 with check and now Black's position looks dire.

**20...Nd6 21.Qxg6 Bf5 22.Qxg7+**

In fact I had intended 22. Qg5 here, but as I began to analyse 22...Bxb1 23. Bxc6 Ne4 24. Bxe4 Bxe4 25 Nc5 things seemed to be getting unnecessarily complicated and I tried for a simpler option.

**22...Qxg7 23.Bxg7 Kxg7 24.Rbc1 Bd3 25.Rfe1 Nhf5 26.Kf2 Rae8 27.Nec3 Kh6 28.g4 hxg4 29.hxg4 Ne7 30.Nc5 Rb8 (D)**



I had missed this move and I suddenly began to see checkmates with the Rook coming to b2 and a Knight sacrificing itself on f5. To play it safe I decided the King should go to g1 (rather than g3 where Nf5 would be check). Therefore I didn't want my Rook to be trapped out of the game on h1, so I went for R(e)d1.

**31.Red1 Rb2+ 32.Kg1 Nef5**

A great move. Suddenly there are lots of ways to get into trouble. 33.gxf5 is death after Rg8 and 33.g5+ means the Knight will always be a thorn in the side on f5

**33.Nxd3 Rxg2+ 34.Kxg2 Nxe3+ 35.Kg3 Nxd1 36.Rxd1 cxd3 37.Rxd3 Nc4**

Now we can see why 35. Kg3 was important, had the King gone to f3 there would be an annoying check threatened now.

**38.Rd4 Ne3 39.Rd6+ Kg7 40.Rd7+ Kh6**

40...Rf7 may have been a better option - Knight and pawn endings are always tricky, but it is not an appetizing prospect for Black

**41.Kf3 Nc4 42.Rc7 Ne5+ 43.Kg3 Rf7 44.Rc8 Rd7 45.fxe5 Rd3+ 46.Kf4 Rxc3 47.Kf5**

Quite an embarrassing move to end on. 47.e6 would have lead to White having an extra queen, but I guess Kf5 was more thematic and was enough to secure a resignation. **1-0**

## Tournament Roundup

### Bray Rapidplay

Karl McPhillips has added the Bray Rapidplay to his rapidly growing trophy cabinet. He beat Simon Jeffares in a blitz playoff to secure the trophy, though the two share the prize money with a number of other players who matched their points haul of 5/6, if not their tie-break scores, including Sam Collins IM and Colm Daly FM.

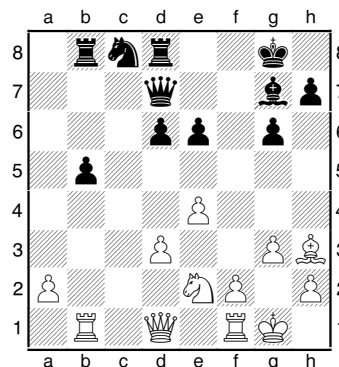
Over 60 people participated in the popular annual 1 day event, which was held in the Esplanade Hotel on the Bray seafront.

### Drogheda

Gerry O'Connell won the Drogheda tournament this year.

### Malahide

Malahide 2007 was held in early May, in its traditional venue of ALSAA, near Dublin airport. Stephen Kelly and Didier Kalamba Mukekwa shared victory in the Challengers section, while Colm Daly was first in the Major section, a half point clear of Stephen Scannell, Bernard Palmer, Gareth Annesley and Nicholas Pilkievicz.



Daly-Keogh,  
Malahide 2007 (5)

**22...g5 23.f4 h6 24.fxg5 hxg5 25.Qd2 Qe7 26.d4 d5 27.e5 Na7 28.Qd3 Qe8 29.Rf2 Rb7 30.Rbf1 Re7 31.Bg4 b4 32.Nc1**

Eyeing up that weak pawn on e6 - c5 will be a good outpost.

**32...Qb5? 33.Qg6! Qe8**

And Black resigned immediately in light of 34.Rf7 Rxf7 35.Rxf7 Qxf7 36.Bxe6

**1-0**

The tournament was run with an incremental Fischer-time, something that proved interesting when Colm Daly v Semyon Mkrtychyan in Rd 2 went right up to 2:29pm, with Rd3 starting at 2:30pm!

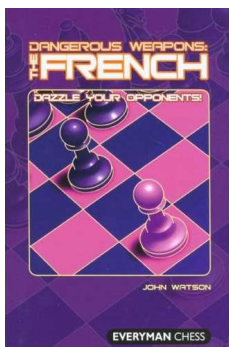
## Book Reviews

John Healy

### Dangerous Weapons: The French

John Watson IM

Everyman Chess  
 Paperback: 320 pages  
 Price around €24  
 ISBN-10: 1857444353  
 ISBN-13: 978-1857444353  
 April 2007.



I get really sick of main lines sometimes, and who doesn't? I can't help feeling that I should probably know them a bit better, but that takes more time than I have to give. Not so John Watson. He's not merely studied, but had a significant impact on the main lines in the French for over twenty years with three editions of his trend-setting *Play the French*. Everyman have recruited him to contribute to a fascinating new series, in which a number of sidelines for both colours of a major opening are examined.

In *Dangerous Weapons: The French* (the other books in the series are on the Sicilian and the Nimzo-indian, and have been well received), Watson seems to have taken to his task with glee, recommending fascinating, obscure lines he feels are actually pretty good. Some of these lines have undeservedly bad reputations, others are just obscure. Many of them have only a couple of high level games to their name. Nevertheless, some of them may be very popular in a few years – 1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nd2 h6!? Looks particularly appealing to me, and Watson has been quoted as claiming that this “just has to be good” against “the anti-positional 3.Nd2.” I've already heard a club-level French specialist declare his love for 3.Nc3 Nc6, which, obscure as it is, has been experimented with by Morozovich and Topalov and is an important part of the repertoires of several lesser GMs, including GM Rosenthalis, the top seed at this year's Irish Championships (though he preferred the Winawer against David Fitzsimons!).

A list of these lines is in order. The first six are recommendations for White, the remainder are for Black. After 1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5

Chapter 1) 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5 Bb4 5.e5 h6 6.Be3  
 Chapter 2) 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5 Be7 e5 Nfd7 Bxe7 Qxe7 Qh5  
 Chapter 3) 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e5 c5 5.Qg4  
 Chapter 4) 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.exd5 exd5 5.Qf3  
 Chapter 5) 3.Nd2 Nf6 4.e5 Nfd7 5.Bd3 c5 6.c3 Nc6 7.Ndf3  
 Chapter 6) 3.Nd2 Nf6 4.e5 Nfd7 5.f4 c5 6.Ng3 Nc6 7.Nb3  
 Chapter 7) 3.Nc3 Nc6  
 Chapter 8) 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e5 c5 5.a3 cxd4  
 Chapter 9) 3.Nc3 h6  
 Chapter 10) 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e5 Bf8; and 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.e5 Ng8  
 Chapter 11) 3.e5 c5 4.c3 Nc6 5.Nf3 Nh6

Chapter 12) 3.Nd2 h6  
 Chapter 13) 3.Nd2 a6  
 Chapter 14) 3.Nd2 Nc6

Each chapter follows a set format. A page or so is spent on the history of the line and the basic ideas behind it. This is followed by an illustrative game. Finally, we have a theory section, which looks at the main lines in a little depth.

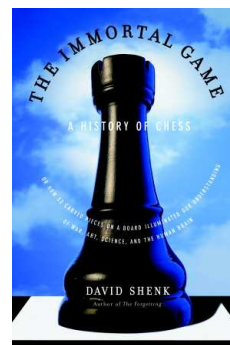
My reservations with this book are entirely superficial. The overall presentation has a slightly gimmicky look, emphasised by the little icons such as a pair of dice for a risky line, or a cannon for a 'dangerous weapon' – which seems to be anything from an attacking line to a strong thematic idea. The diagrams are a bit awkward, with a strange presentation where they are two abreast. This often leaves diagrams quite far from their reference in the text, which I found annoying. These minor issues really don't count for much – I wish the only complaint I ever had about books involved trivial formatting issues!

*Dangerous Weapons: The French* is an absolute must for players who use the French Defence, interesting for people looking for an offbeat but useful line against it as White, and worth a look for anyone interested in quirky lines where they can be creative.

### The Immortal Game

David Shenk

Souvenir Press  
 Hardback: 313 pages  
 Price around €30  
 ISBN 978 0 285 63786 3  
 September 2006.



“How 32 carved pieces on a board illuminated our understanding of War, Art, Science and the Human Brain,” the dust jacket of this book

claims ambitiously. It's a history of the game interweaved with the moves of the 'Immortal Game', Anderssen v Kieseritzky, 1851, written by an amateur player who clearly has a passion for the subject. The book is aimed at a very broad market, with the rules of the game covered in an appendix, and no prior understanding assumed.

The history runs from the origins of the game in the middle east to the future of computer chess, discussing the social standing and influences of the game throughout. This part of the book is fairly well researched (there are a few minor errors here and there, though only the very well versed on the subject will spot them). The analysis can seem like the author is stretching at times, but overall adds well to a nice collection of anecdotes and an well-told narrative.

The Immortal Game is returned to about every other chapter, at a pace of about two moves per chapter. Because of the intended readership, the style of the notes is very unusual. Each move is explained in simple prose, in a superficial fashion. Interspered among the notes is more

background to the game, as well as more general musings – the concept of the opening is explained at one point, along with the earliest references to it in arabic texts. These notes, while interesting and well written, are frustrating for a more experienced player to read. There are several moves in the game which are known to be errors (you can't lose that spectacularly and quickly without making some errors!) but this is entirely ignored. There is never any discussion of alternatives. The notes are a lovely introduction to the game for a novice, but for all the beauty of the game itself, it's a bit annoying to regular players to have no real commentary on it.

Overall, *The Immortal Game* is well written and worth a read. It may however be best suited as a gift for a friend who doesn't play much, or a long-suffering spouse who would like to know what the heck you see in the game. Unfortunately, an ill-advised section on the Freudian view of the game makes it impossible to recommend for kids, unless you'd like to work through the book with a child, skipping over that point.

## The c3 Sicilian

Sam Collins IM

Gambit Publications

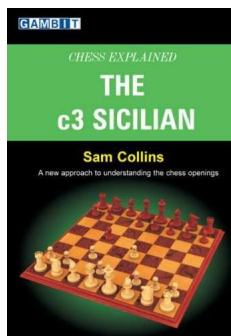
Paperback: 111 pages

RRP €20.35

ISBN-10: 1904600719

ISBN-13: 978-1904600718

April 2007.



Sam's latest book was out in April. I haven't had a chance to read it yet myself, but I'm sticking it in here anyway as a new book by an Irish author is of interest to the public anyway. It covers the c3 Sicilian (1.e4 c5 2.c3), an opening with a solid reputation.

Gambit have an extract available (<http://www.gambitbooks.com/pdfs/719Samp.pdf>).

I'll quote just one review, but there are more available online, and I've found them to be uniformly positive.

"[Collins'] honesty is wonderfully refreshing, because most opening books are written with some bias, and while Collins may favor White's chances slightly more than Black's, he generally 'calls 'em as he sees them.' In addition, I found his game commentary to be very instructive, insightful and even enjoyable. There is a fair share of variations in the annotations to the main games, but there is far more prose, and you can actually read the book without using a chess board and still learn plenty in the process. The games are well-chosen and the text is well-written, so it is rather easy to recommend this book to a wide audience, whether you play the c3-Sicilian or not. Of course, those who play this opening as white or face it as black should buy this book without hesitation." - Carsten Hansen, [www.chesscafe.com](http://www.chesscafe.com)

## ICU Ratings

The latest list was published in January.

Members can view their rating on [www.icu.ie](http://www.icu.ie) where you can also view your rating history and sort the rating list by rating, club, etc. Please note that this list only contains players who are current members of the ICU.

The next rating list is expected to be out shortly.

## FIDE Ratings

This is the July 2007 FIDE list. The next update is due in October.

#	Name, title	Rating	G
1	Baburin, Alexander, g	2559	12
2	Kelly, Brian, m	2480	0
3	Collins, Sam E., m	2405	16
4	Quinn, Mark, m	2397	0
5	Brady, Stephen, f	2360	0
6	Daly, Colm, f	2355	9
7	Heidenfeld, Mark, m	2349	3
8	Astaneh Lopez, Alex, f	2337	0
9	Wall, Gavin, m	2328	15
10	Jessel, Stephen, f	2326	11
11	Ryan, Joseph, f	2320	17
12	Wallace, Paul	2282	5
13	Short, Philip M, f	2277	0
14	Joyce, John	2267	8
15	Orr, Mark J L, m	2266	4
16	O'Cinneide, Mel	2263	0
17	White, John S	2230	11
18	McMahon, Daire	2222	0
18	Allen, Keith	2222	0
20	Redmond, John	2212	4
21	Murray, John	2209	0
21	Smith, Andrew Philip, f	2209	8
21	White, John	2209	0
21	O'Shaughnessy, Conor	2209	2
25	O'Connor, Jonathan	2201	0
26	McPhillips, Karl	2185	0
27	O'Donovan, Richard	2174	0
28	Scannell, Stephen	2151	0
29	O'Connell, Gerard	2146	0
30	Clarke, Thomas	2137	0
31	Schmidt, Martin	2134	0
32	Fitzsimons, David	2133	0
33	Smith, Derek	2131	0
34	MacElligott, Gerard	2130	0
35	Dignam, Matthew	2122	5
36	Freeman, Gordon	2100	0
37	Waters, Michael	2096	0
38	Jeffares, Simon	2095	0
38	Keogh, Eamon	2095	8

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40	Path, David	2090	0
41	O'Rourke, Ray	2086	0
42	McCarthy, Jim	2084	0
42	Fox, Anthony	2084	6
44	McKeown, Paul	2080	1
45	O'Driscoll, Kieran	2062	0
46	Fitzpatrick, Brian	2055	0
47	O'Leary, Matt	2052	0
48	Griffiths, Ryan Rhys	2046	13
49	Walsh, Paul	2045	0
49	Harpur, Colin A	2045	0
51	Quinn, Rory	2044	0
52	Butler, Kevin	2043	0
53	McDonnell, James J.	2041	0
53	Galligan, Brian	2041	7
55	Delaney, Killian	2037	0
56	O'Shea, Kevin	2035	0
57	Cafolla, Peter	2034	0
58	Healy, Tom	2020	0
59	Crichton, Martin	2019	7
60	Connolly, Suzanne	2012	1
61	De, Jonge Henk	2005	0
62	Murray, David	1990	0
63	Ui Laihleis, Gearoidin	1986	0
64	Goetzee, Rick	1984	10
65	Palmer, Bernard	1980	0
66	Hanly, Steven	1978	8
67	Boyle, Bernard	1977	0
68	O'dwyer, Fergal	1974	9
69	Muntadas, Alan	1968	0
70	Murphy, Dara	1956	0
71	Menon Jayadev, Poornima,wf	1951	0
72	O'Grady, Gary	1937	0
73	Osborne, Sam	1929	0
74	Murtagh, Dermot	1924	0
75	Salter, David	1917	0
76	Nicholson, John	1910	0
77	Twomey, Pat	1894	0
78	Moran, Stephen	1892	0
79	Hogarty, Philip	1865	0
80	Smith, David J.	1860	0
81	Dunne, Paul	1847	8
82	Quinn, Deborah	1837	0
83	Benson, Oisín P.	1835	0
84	Lowry-O'Reilly, Hannah,wf	1813	1
85	Loughran, John	1789	0
86	O'Brien, Kieran	1773	0
87	Normoyle, Liam	1757	0
88	Grzymek, David	1677	0

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## Upcoming Tournaments

### Galway Chess Congress 2007

**Dates** Sep 21-23, 2007

**Location** Salthill Hotel, Galway

**Prize Fund** €4000

**Contact** Ronan Duke, 091 471792

### Irish Veteran Championship

The Irish Veterans' Championship, originally advertised for September 1-3, has been postponed to a date to be announced (probably October). Look out for details re-appearing in the Calendar section of [icu.ie](http://www.icu.ie) in due course.

**Contact** Andrew Thomson, 041 9836110

### Gonzaga Charity Classic

**Dates** Feb 1-3, 2008

**Location** Gonzaga College SJ, Sandford Road, Dublin 6

**Prize Fund** €2000

**Contact** Michael O Toole, Phone 0830077317,  
[otoole.timmy@gmail.com](mailto:otoole.timmy@gmail.com)

#### Tournaments for which we don't have any information:

- Kilkenny, Late November
- Limerick, October?
- Benildus Charity Blitz, early January

Watch out for these on [www.icu.ie](http://www.icu.ie)

### Limerick Monthly Rapidplays

**Dates** Sep 9, 2007 to Apr 13, 2008

**Location** Kilmurry Lodge Hotel, Castletroy, Limerick

**Contact** John Alfred,  
[chessadare@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:chessadare@yahoo.co.uk),  
087 6794211

### Anyone for Chess 2007

One Day Fun Tournament

**Date** Sep 29, 2007

**Location** Kilmurray House Hotel, Castletroy, Limerick

**Contact** Shirley Bennett,  
[shirleybennett@eircom.net](mailto:shirleybennett@eircom.net),  
061 378753

#### Primary Schools - Teams of 4

Format 5 round Swiss

**Round Times** Check in 10.00, event starts 10.30 & ends 16:30

**Entry Fee** 40.00 Euro per Team

**Notes** Lunch is available at a cost of 6.00 EURO per person (Sausages & Mash & Drink)

#### Secondary School - Individual

Format 5 round Swiss

**Round Times** Check in 10.00, event starts 10.30 & ends 16:30

**Entry Fee** 20.00 Euro per person

**Notes** Two sections (1st year to junior cert and 4th year to leaving cert)